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THE WALKING DEAD

19

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TM
04

IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS

THE WALKING DEAD™

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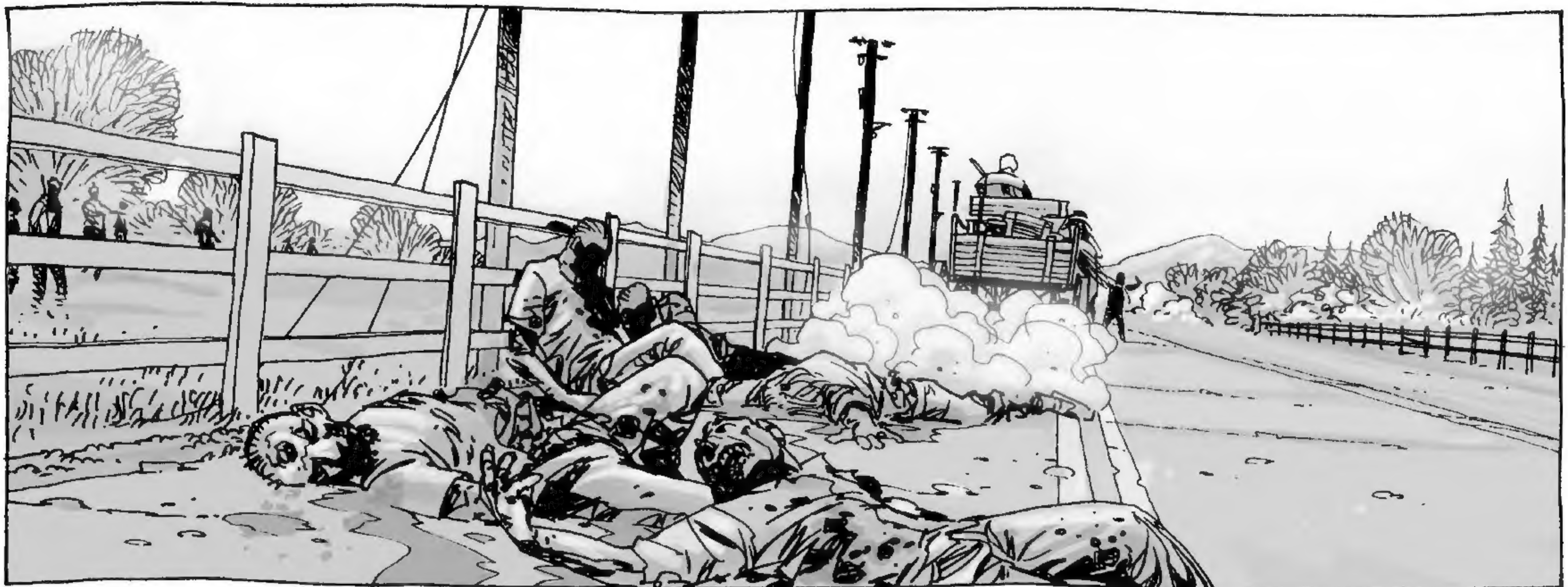
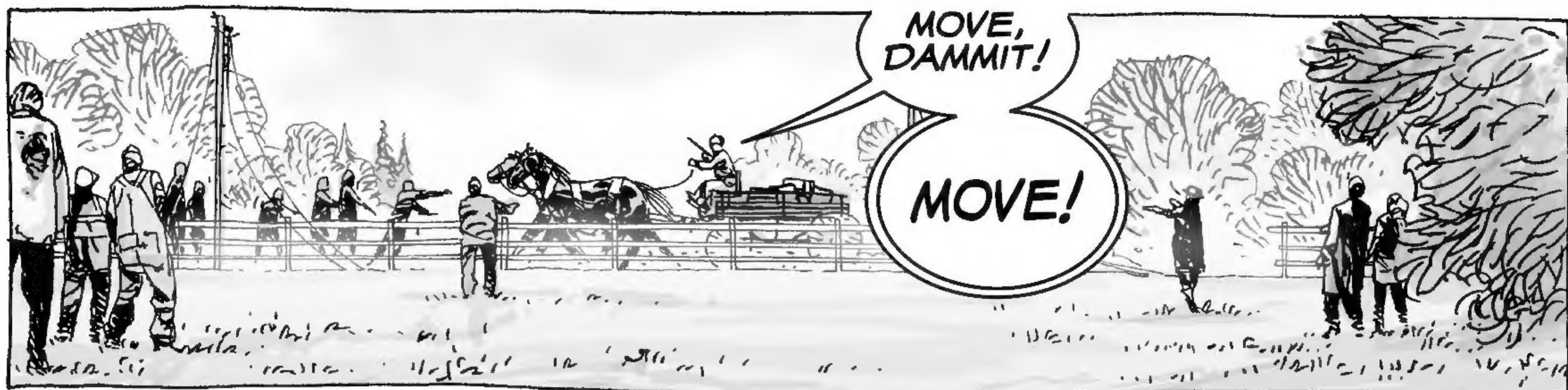
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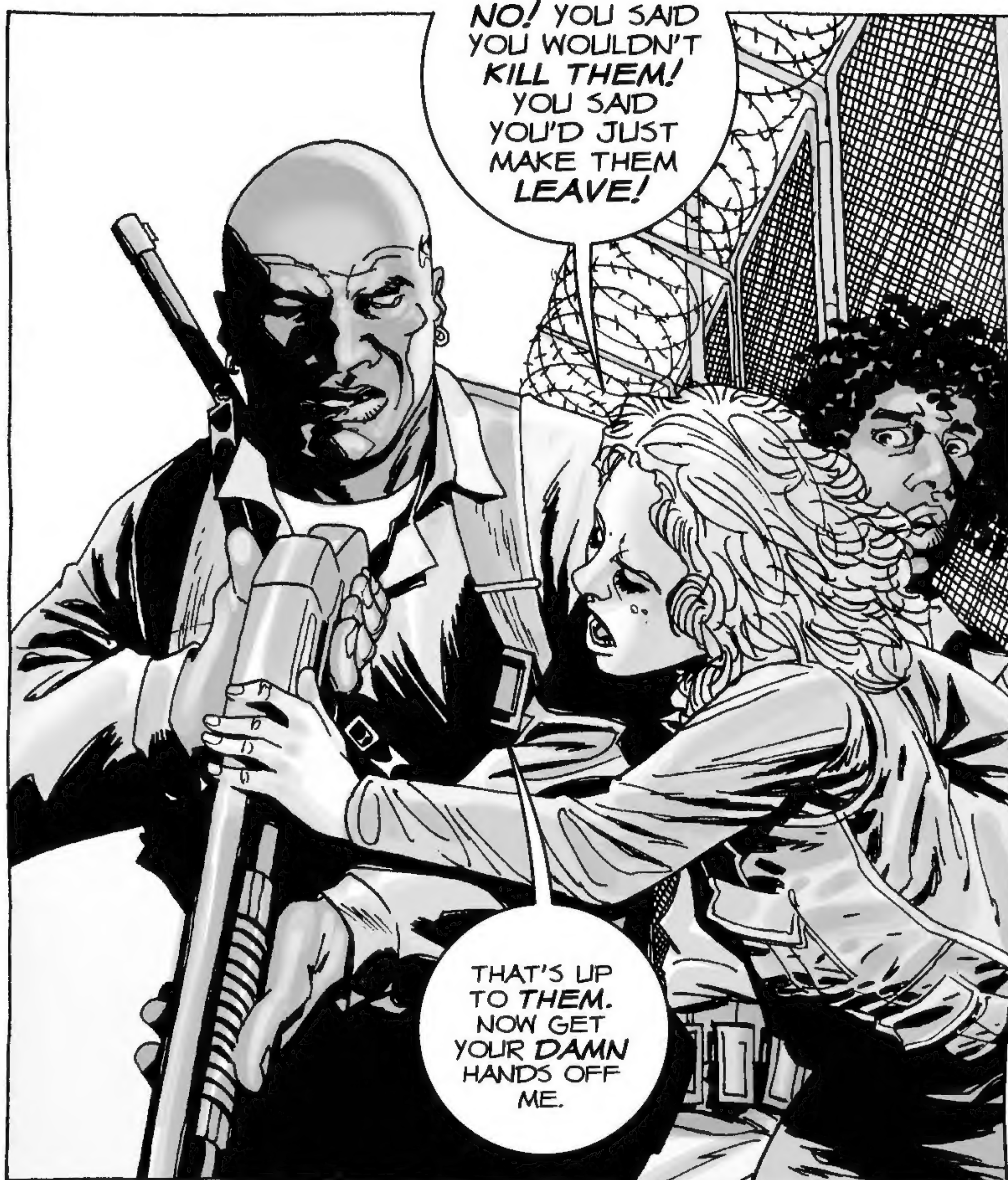
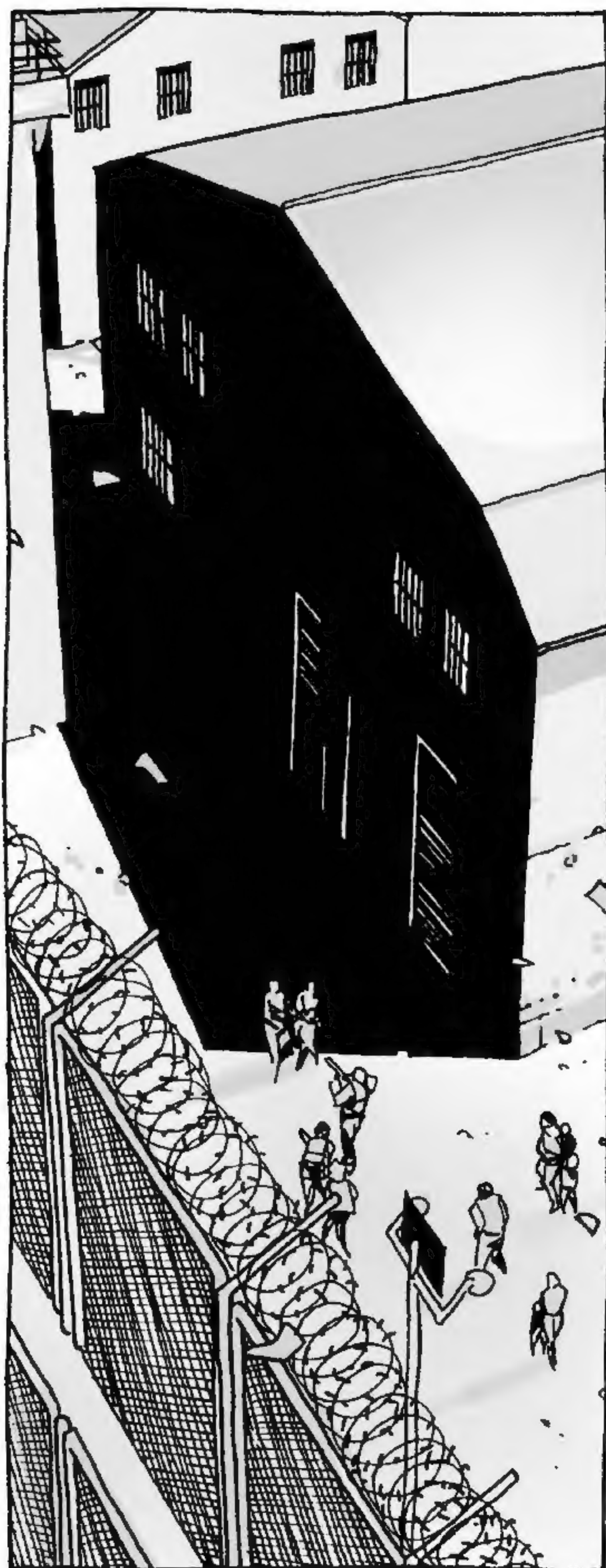


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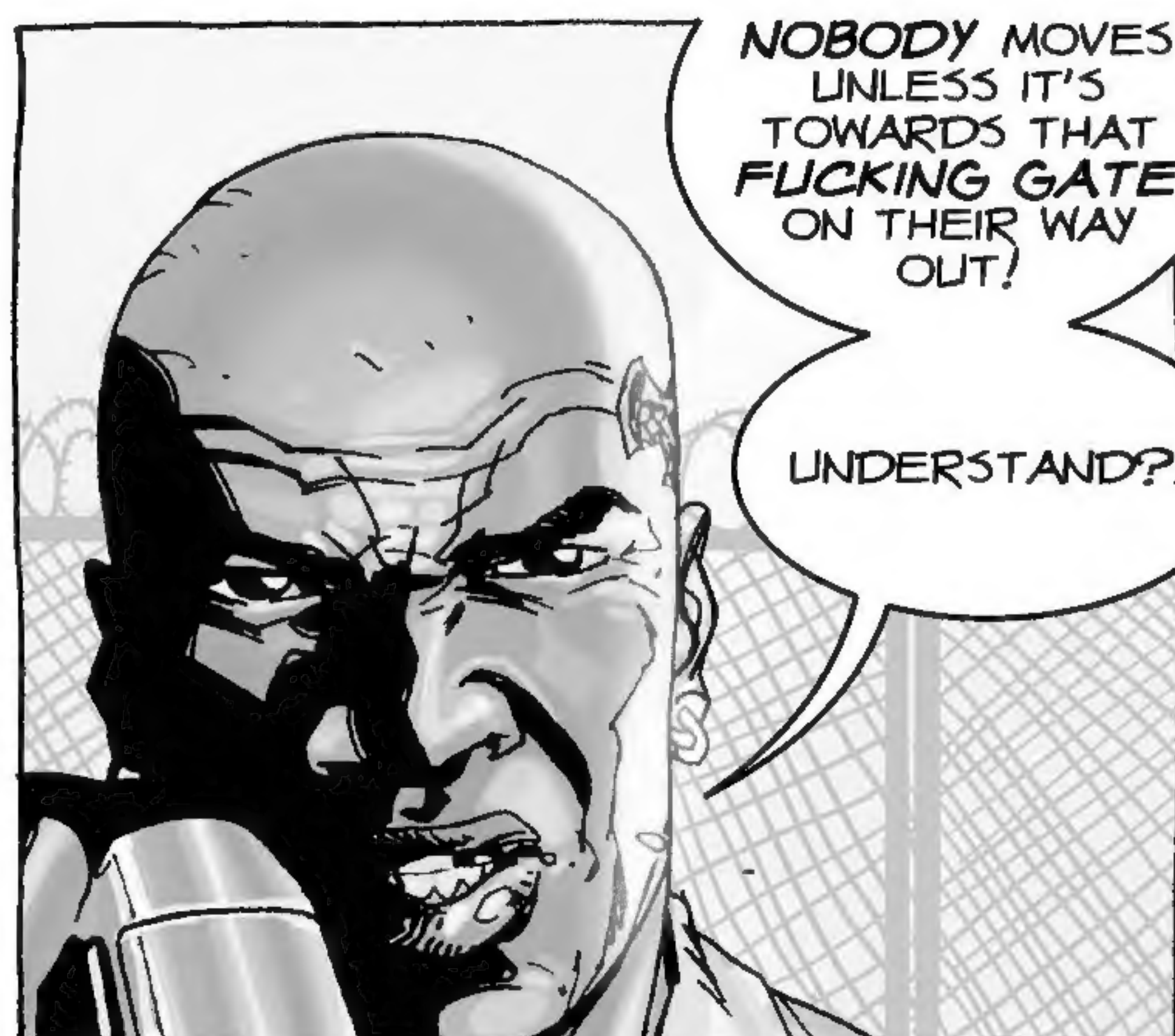


NO! YOU SAID
YOU WOULDN'T
KILL THEM!
YOU SAID
YOU'D JUST
MAKE THEM
LEAVE!

THAT'S UP
TO THEM.
NOW GET
YOUR DAMN
HANDS OFF
ME.



LORI, GET ALL
THE KIDS INSIDE
SO I CAN TALK
SOME
SENSE INTO
DEXTER.



NOBODY MOVES
UNLESS IT'S
TOWARDS THAT
FUCKING GATE
ON THEIR WAY
OUT!

UNDERSTAND?!

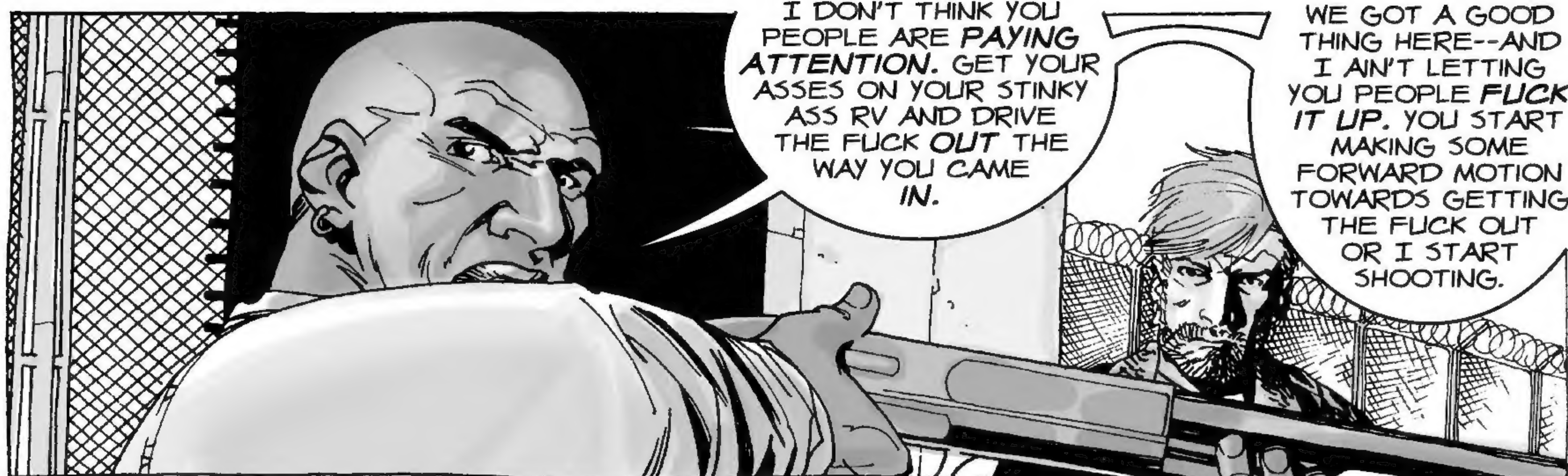
WE'RE JUST GOING
TO TALK, DEXTER.
I'VE DROPPED MY
GUN--YOU'RE IN
CONTROL! LET
THEM GO
INSIDE!

GO,
HONEY--
QUICKLY.

ONE MORE
STEP AND
THEY'RE
DEAD.

DO
WHAT I
FUCKING SAY OR
GET SHOT. THOSE
ARE YOUR ONLY
CHOICES RIGHT NOW.





I DON'T THINK YOU PEOPLE ARE **PAYING ATTENTION**. GET YOUR **ASSES** ON YOUR **STINKY ASS RV** AND DRIVE THE **FUCK OUT** THE WAY YOU CAME IN.

WE GOT A GOOD THING HERE--AND I AIN'T LETTING YOU PEOPLE **FUCK IT UP**. YOU START MAKING SOME FORWARD MOTION TOWARDS GETTING THE **FUCK OUT** OR I START SHOOTING.

YOU **AIN'T** GOTTA DO THIS, MAN. IT AIN'T GOTTA GO DOWN THIS WAY, BROTHER. THESE ARE **GOOD PEOPLE**--YOU CAN'T FAULT THEM FOR THEIR **MISTAKE**.

YOU WERE A LIKELY SUSPECT AT THE TIME. YOU FOLLOW ME? THEY WERE JUST TRYING TO **PROTECT** THEMSELVES.

PLEASE, MAN. DON'T DO THIS.

YOU KNOW WHAT, AXEL? YOU SIDIN' WITH **THEM**--YOU CAN **LEAVE** WITH THEM.



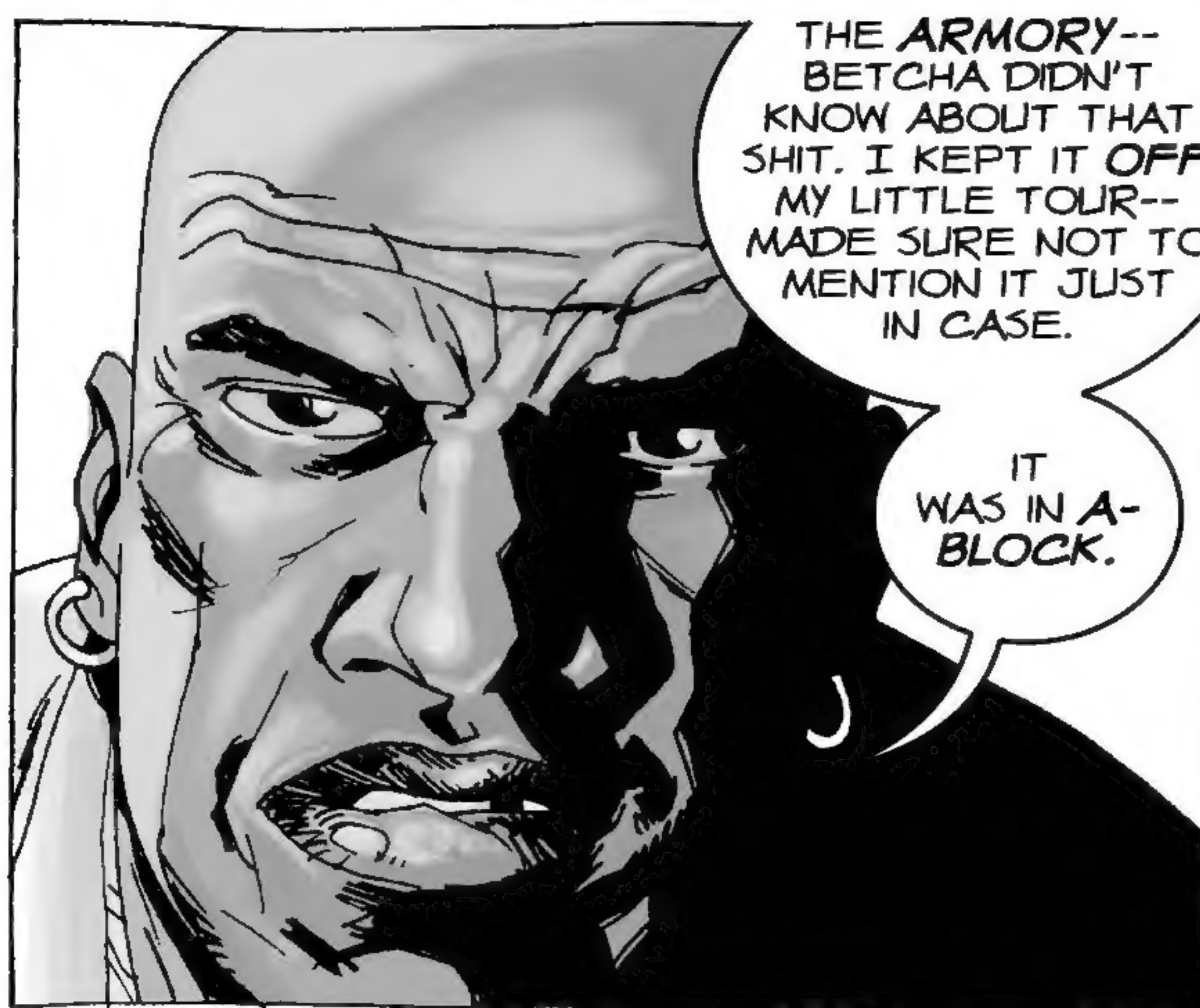
YOU FOLLOW ME?!

WHERE DID YOU GET THOSE **GUNS**?



WHAT DO YOU **CARE**? I GOT 'EM IS WHAT **MATTERS**.

WHERE DID YOU GET THOSE **FUCKING GUNS**?



THE **ARMORY**--BETCHA DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THAT SHIT. I KEPT IT **OFF** MY LITTLE TOUR--MADE SURE NOT TO MENTION IT JUST IN CASE.

IT WAS IN A-**BLOCK**.



THAT'S
WHAT I
THOUGHT.

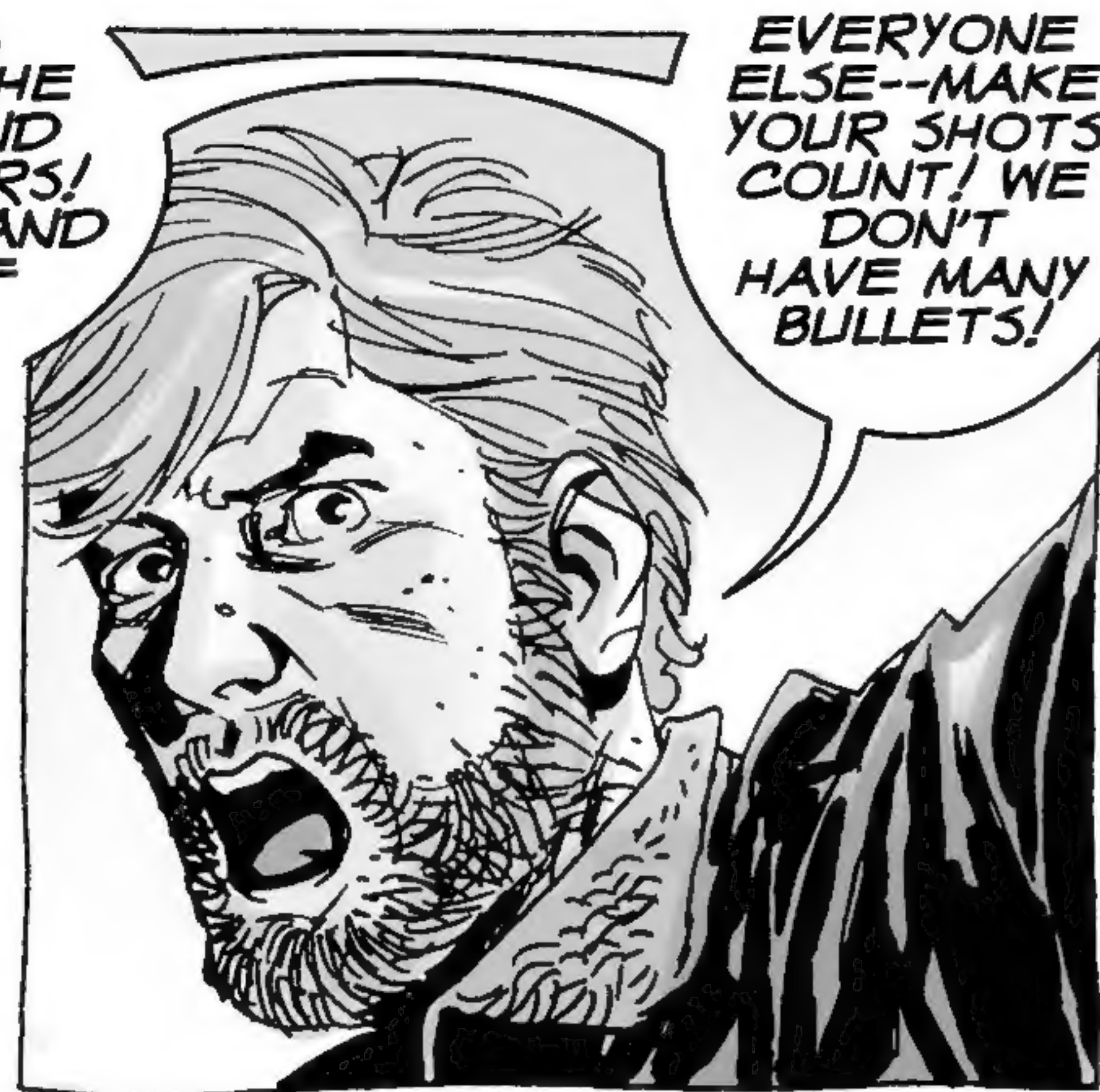


THE
FUCK YOU
MEAN--?

MOTHER
FUCKER.



LORI, CAROL,
ALLEN! TAKE THE
KIDS INSIDE AND
LOCK THE DOORS!
SEND ANDREA AND
GLENN OUT IF
YOU CAN.



EVERYONE
ELSE--MAKE
YOUR SHOTS
COUNT! WE
DON'T
HAVE MANY
BULLETS!



I SAID
NOBODY
FUCKING
MOVES!!

RICK!

ARE
YOU GOING
TO SHOOT *THEM*
OR ARE YOU
GOING TO SHOOT
THE ROAMERS
TRYING TO
KILL YOU?



PICK A
SIDE,
DUMBASS!

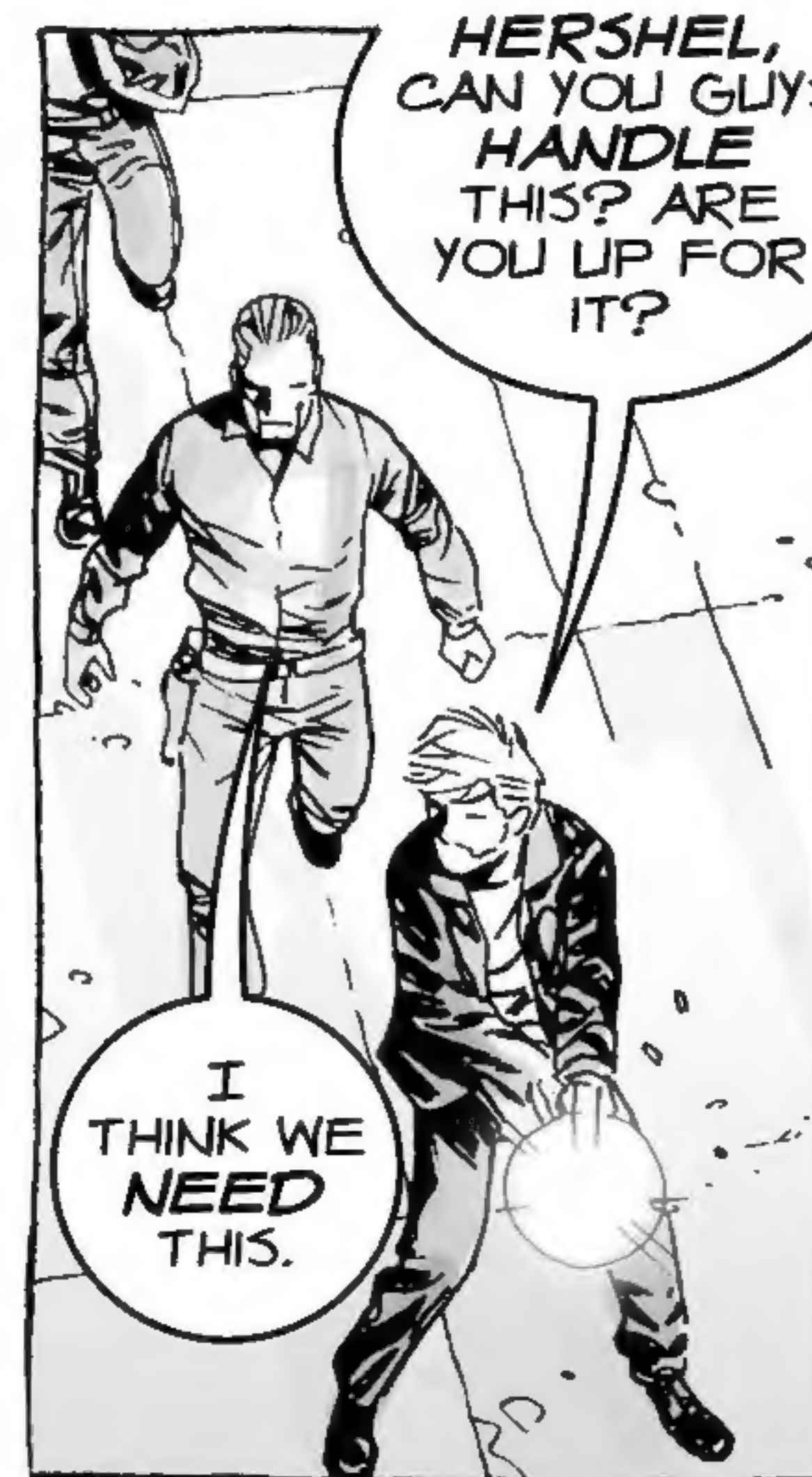
SEE IF YOU CAN
SEND ANDREA AND
GLENN OUT HERE. I'M
GOING TO STAY OUT
HERE AND HELP.
WATCH MY
BOYS!



BE
CAREFUL,
ALLEN.



ANDREW--
THROW ME A
FLICKING GUN.
I AN'T GOING
TO BE SCARING
THESE THINGS
AWAY WITH MY
DICK!



HERSHEL,
CAN YOU GUYS
HANDLE
THIS? ARE
YOU UP FOR
IT?

I
THINK WE
NEED
THIS.



FUCKING
HELL,
PEOPLE! WHAT
HAPPENED
OUT
HERE?!



GET UP HERE
AND SHOOT!
I'LL FILL YOU
IN WHEN
WE'RE
DONE!!



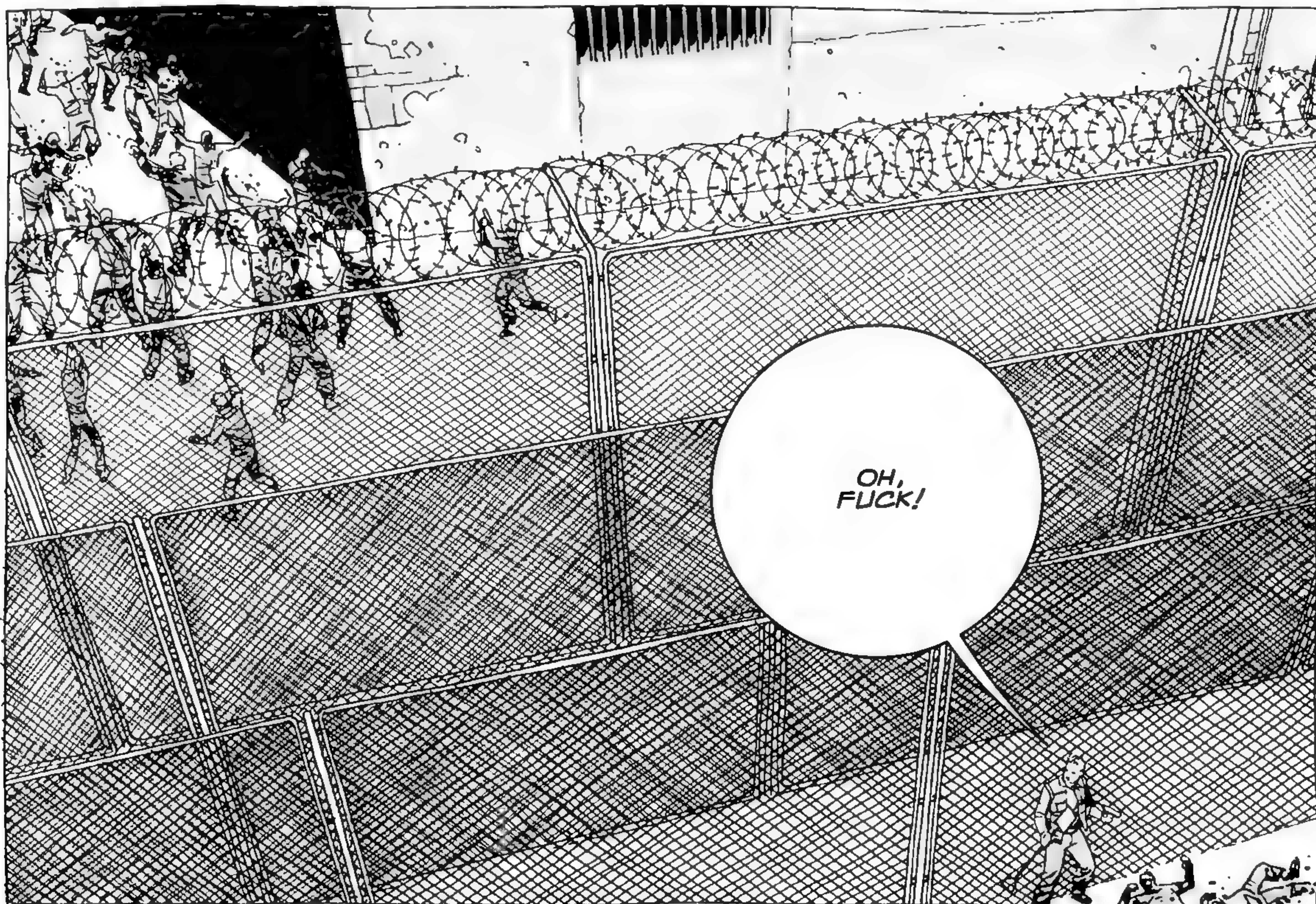




HEY, Y'ALL!!
OPEN THIS
GATE! LET
ME IN!



Y'ALL?



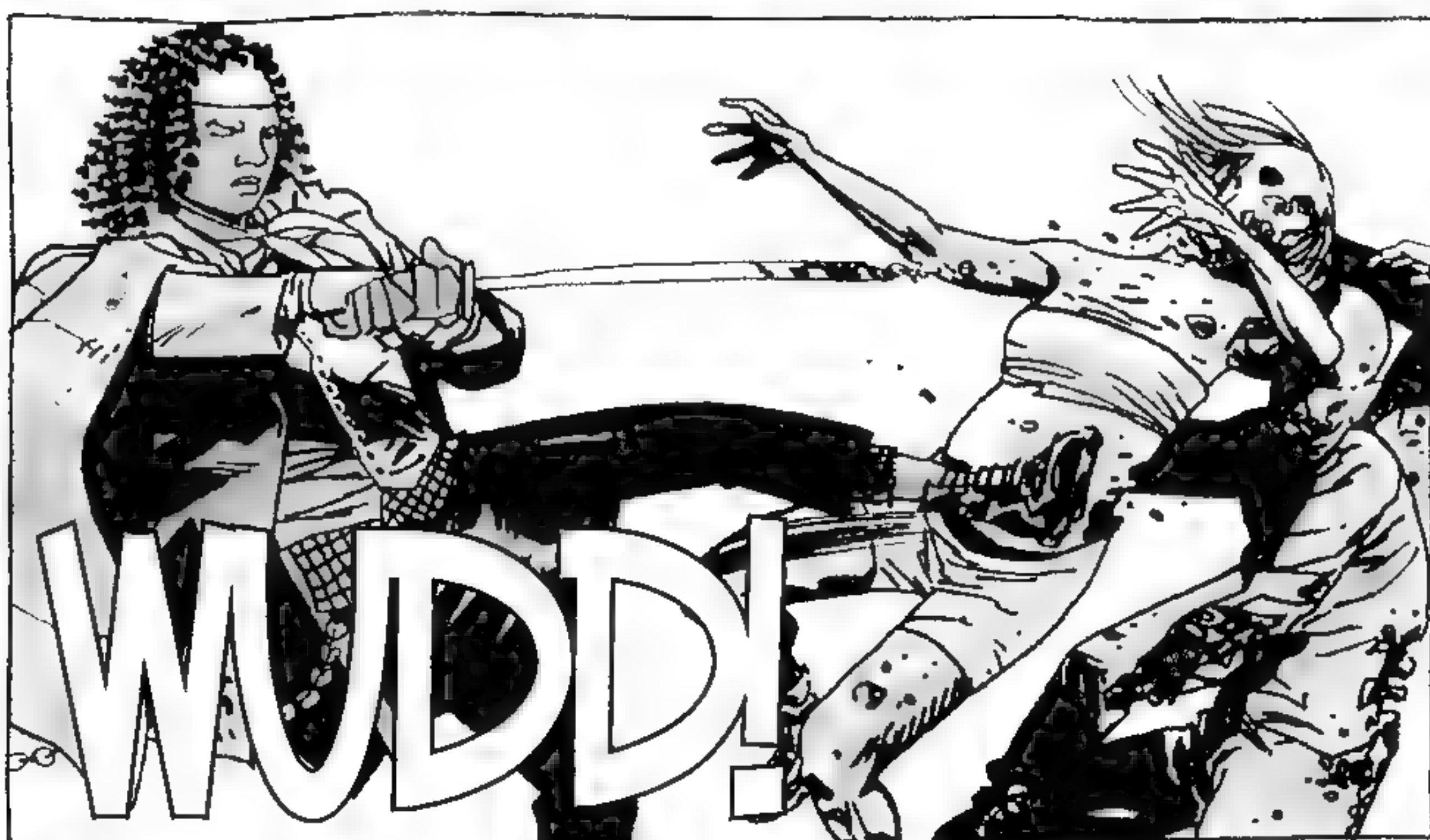
OH,
FUCK!



OH,
FUCK!



SHLOKK!



WUDD!



STAY
CLOSE
TO ME.



SKRAGG!

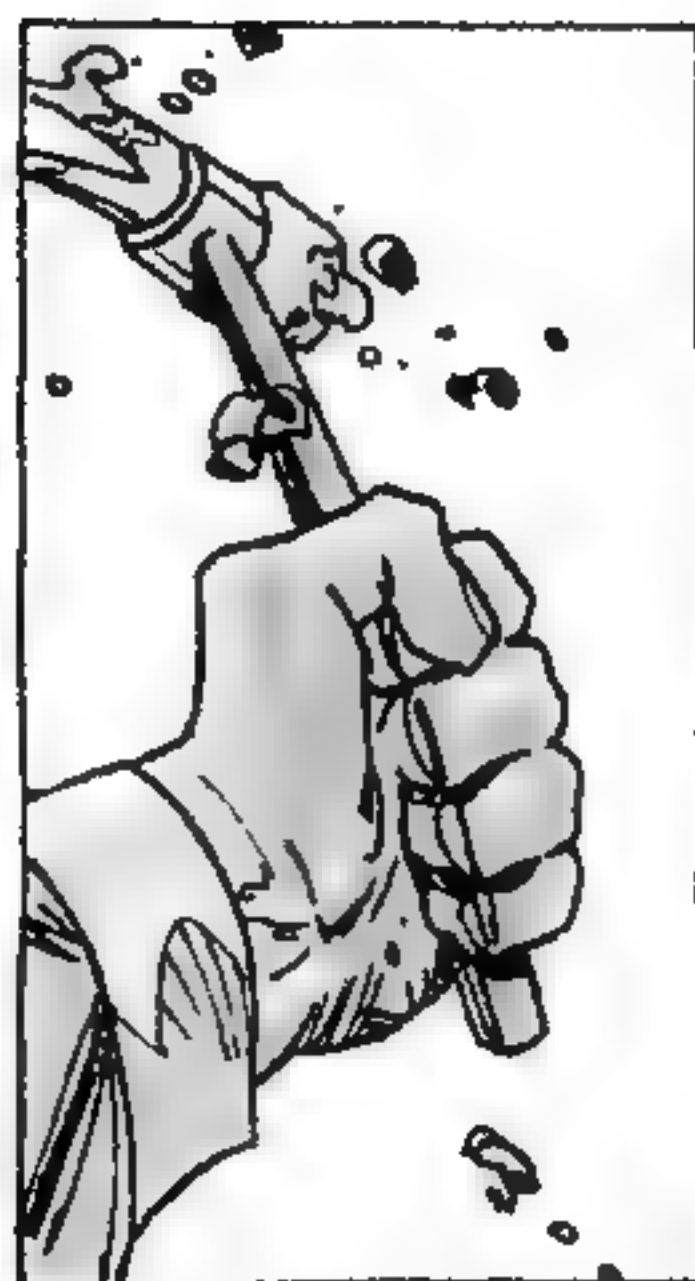
YES,
MA'AM!



RUN FOR YOUR
CART AND GET
YOUR GUNS--
I'LL HOLD
THEM OFF.

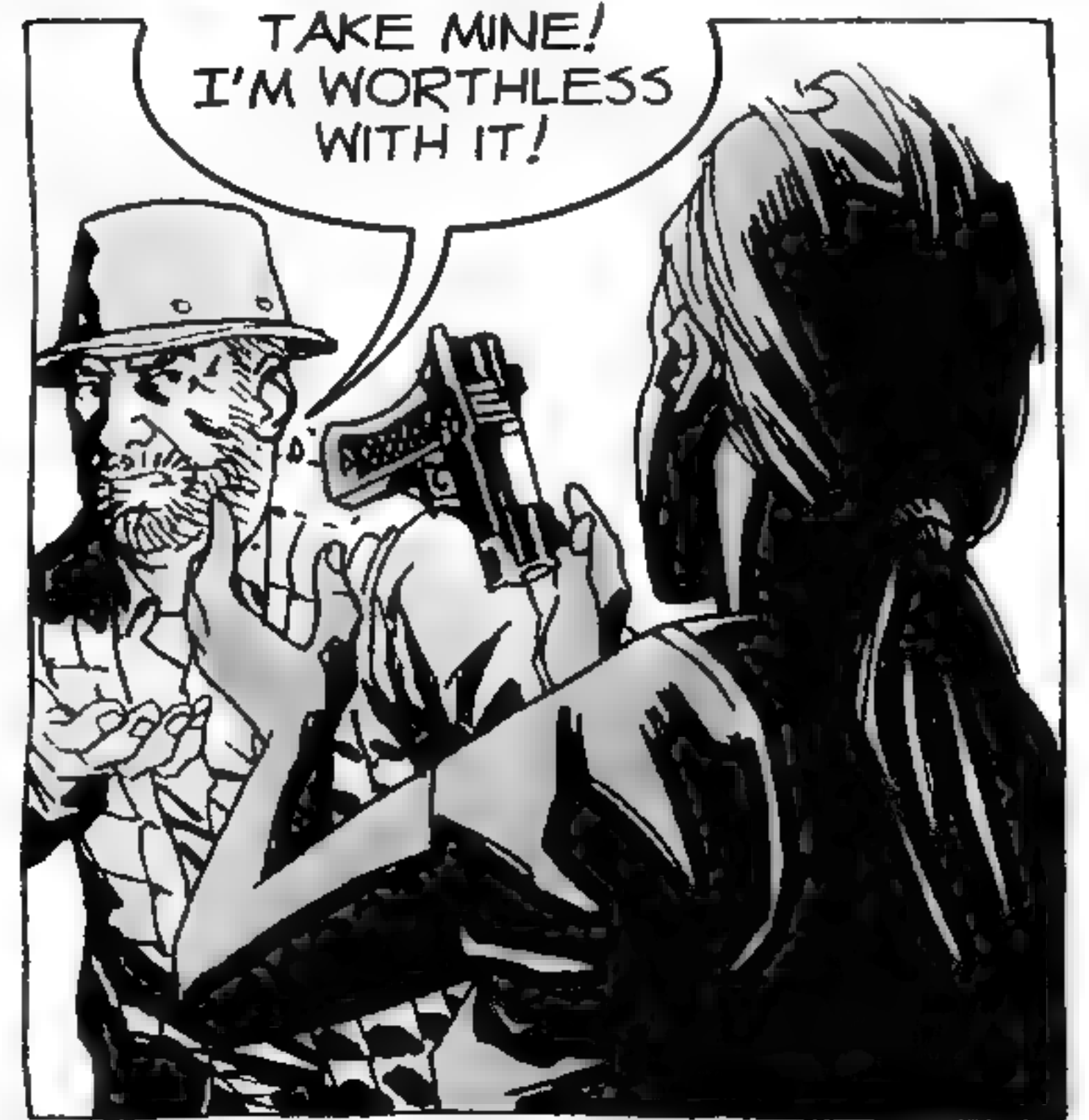
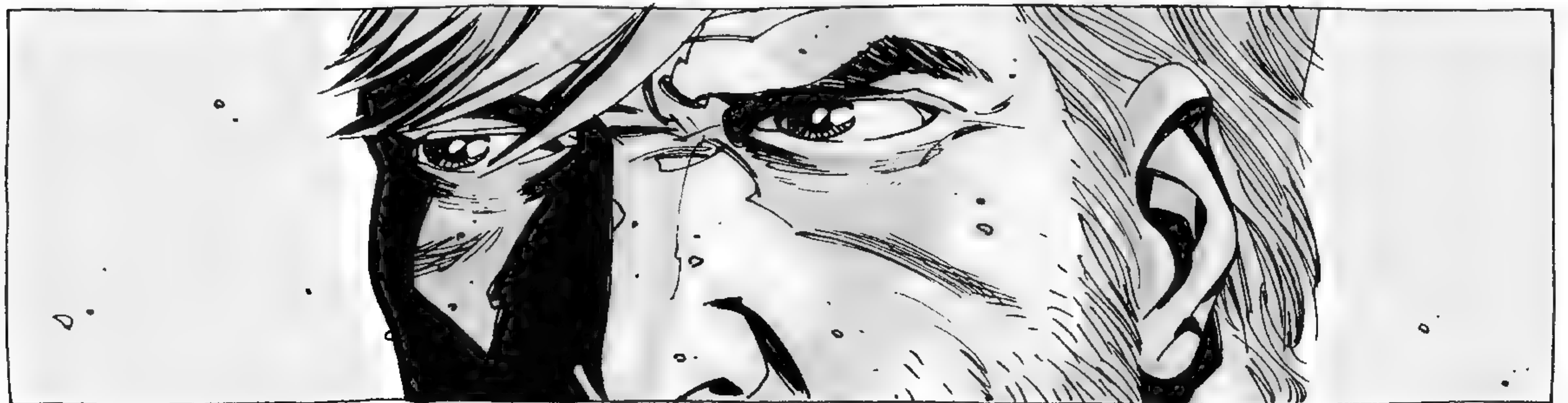






SPREAD OUT!
WHATEVER
YOU DO--DON'T
LET THEM
SURROUND
US!









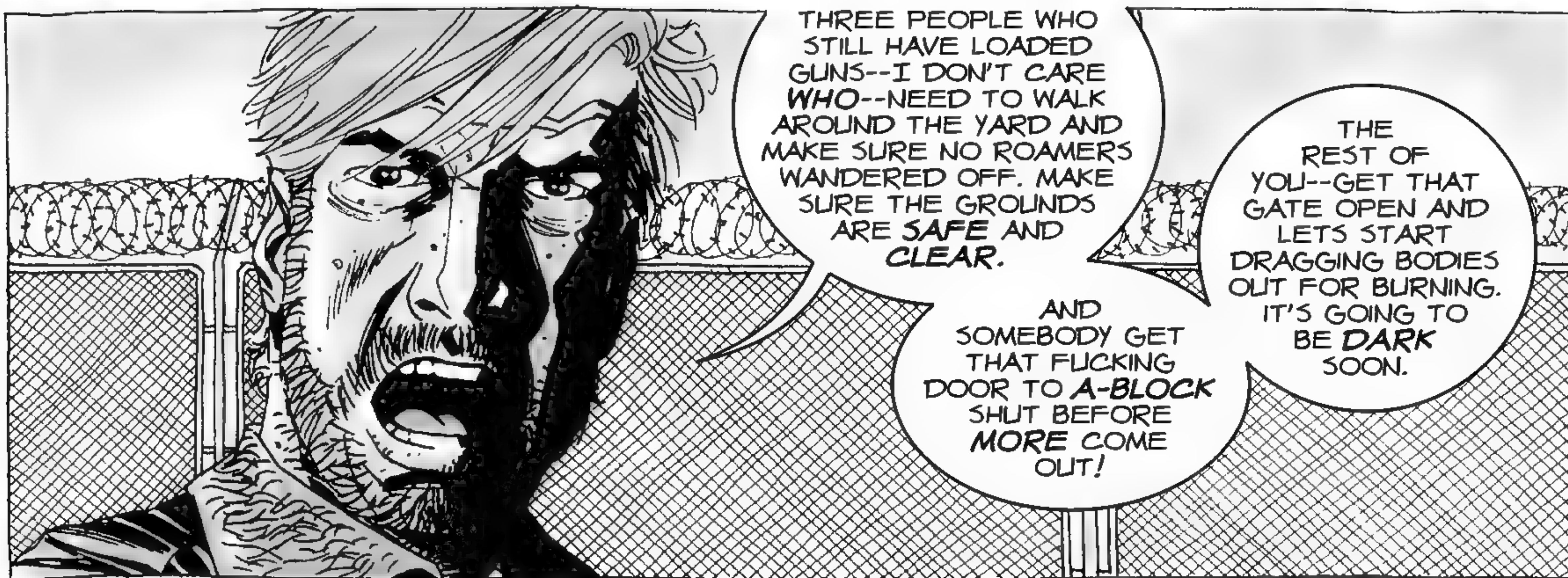
HE MUST HAVE BEEN HIT BY ACCIDENT. WE WERE ALL SHOOTING--HE MUST HAVE CAUGHT A STRAY BULLET.



FUCK--MAN--HE'S DEAD! WHAT AM I GOING TO DO NOW?!



YOU CAN STILL TRY TO KICK US OUT IF YOU WANT, ANDREW. BUT I'D SUGGEST SURRENDER.



THREE PEOPLE WHO STILL HAVE LOADED GUNS--I DON'T CARE WHO--NEED TO WALK AROUND THE YARD AND MAKE SURE NO ROAMERS WANDERED OFF. MAKE SURE THE GROUNDS ARE SAFE AND CLEAR.

THE REST OF YOU--GET THAT GATE OPEN AND LET'S START DRAGGING BODIES OUT FOR BURNING. IT'S GOING TO BE DARK SOON.

AND SOMEBODY GET THAT FUCKING DOOR TO A-BLOCK SHUT BEFORE MORE COME OUT!



ALL RIGHT--HAND THEM OVER. WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU GUYS THINKING?!

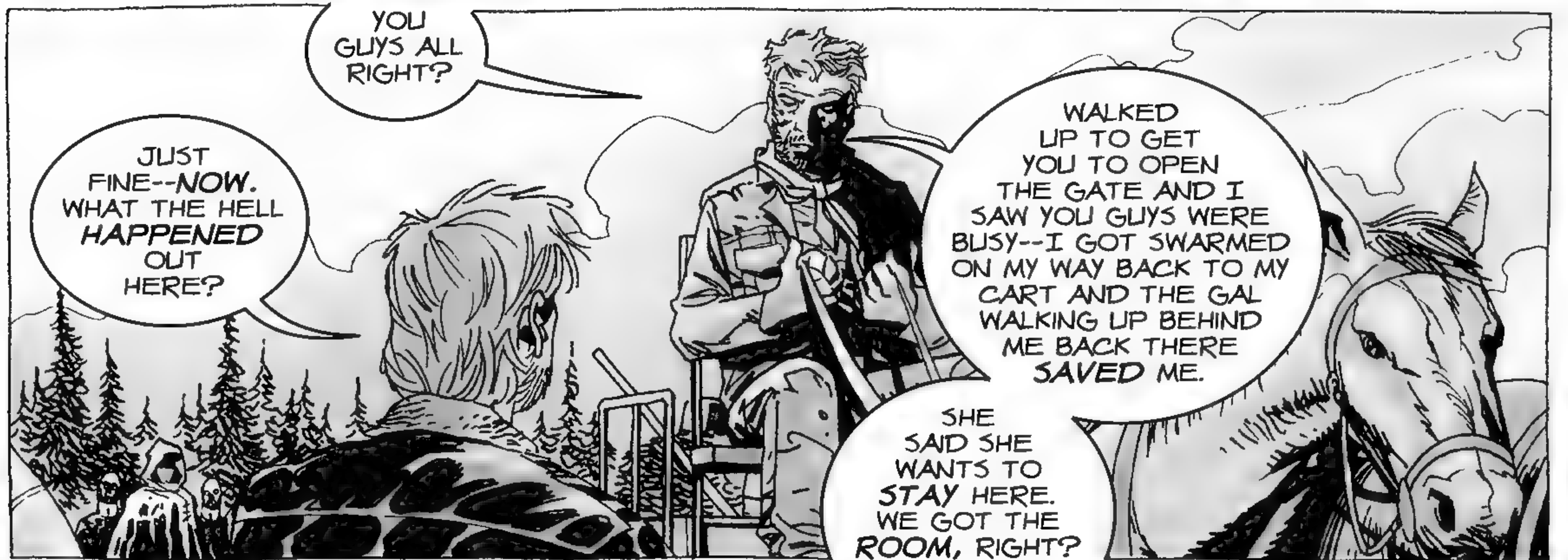




WHAT THE HELL
HAPPENED OUT
HERE?!

I
THOUGHT
I CAUGHT
SOMETHING OUT
OF THE CORNER
OF MY EYE GOING
ON OUT HERE
WHILE WE WERE
FIGHTING BUT I
DIDN'T THINK
TWICE
ABOUT IT.

LOOK--
IT'S OTIS.



YOU
GUYS ALL
RIGHT?

JUST
FINE--NOW.
WHAT THE HELL
HAPPENED
OUT
HERE?

WALKED
UP TO GET
YOU TO OPEN
THE GATE AND I
SAW YOU GUYS WERE
BUSY--I GOT SWARMED
ON MY WAY BACK TO MY
CART AND THE GAL
WALKING UP BEHIND
ME BACK THERE
SAVED ME.

SHE
SAID SHE
WANTS TO
STAY HERE.
WE GOT THE
ROOM, RIGHT?



MORE ROOM
THAN WE HAD
WHEN YOU
LEFT...



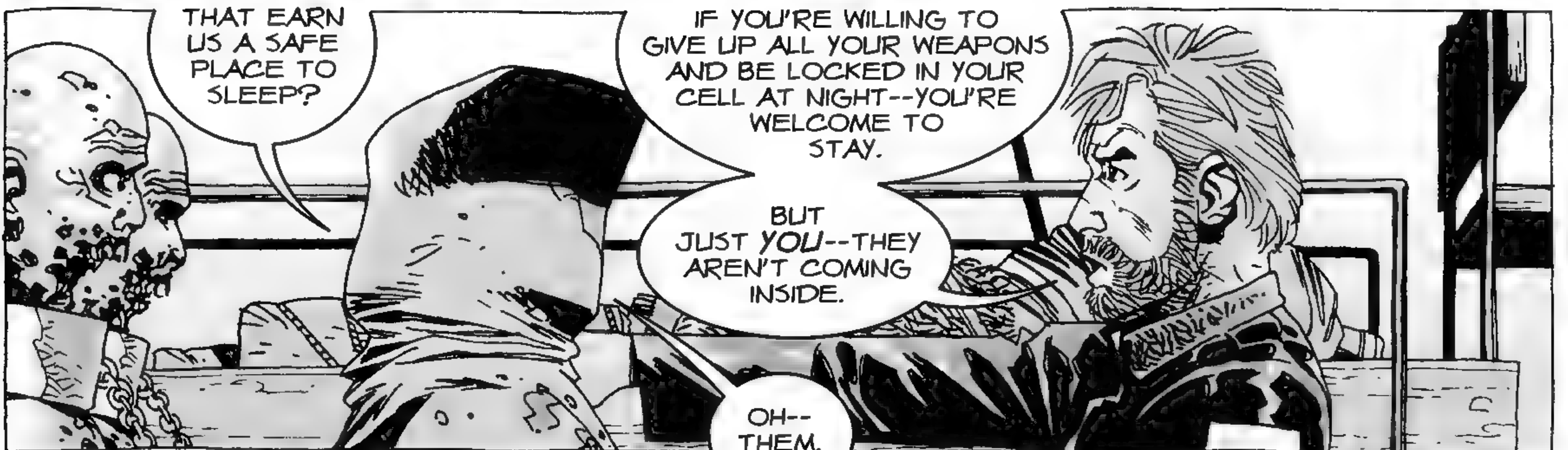
WHAT? WHO?
WHO'S DIED?
PATRICIA
OKAY?!



SHE'S
FINE. WE'LL
FILL YOU IN ON
THE REST,
LATER.



HEY, LADY!
YOU SAVE HIS
LIFE?



THAT EARN
US A SAFE
PLACE TO
SLEEP?

IF YOU'RE WILLING TO
GIVE UP ALL YOUR WEAPONS
AND BE LOCKED IN YOUR
CELL AT NIGHT--YOU'RE
WELCOME TO
STAY.

BUT
JUST YOU--THEY
AREN'T COMING
INSIDE.

OH--
THEM.





YOU GOT
HER LOCKED
UP?

YEAH--I
CHECKED HER
AGAIN TO MAKE
SURE SHE DIDN'T
HAVE ANY
WEAPONS TOO.
NOT TAKING ANY
CHANCES,
Y'KNOW.

GOOD.
THAT WOMAN'S
GOT TO BE
TOUGH AS NAILS
TO LAST AS LONG
AS SHE DID
ALONE OUT
THERE.

SAVED
OTIS' ASS,
TOO. DAMN.
WE NEED TO
KEEP AN
EYE ON
HER.



WILL
DO. YOU
COPING
OKAY?

I SAW
WHAT YOU
DID. WITH
DEXTER I
MEAN.



YEAH.



I THINK YOU DID THE
RIGHT THING. THE WAY
THINGS WERE LOOKING
THAT FOOL WAS GOING
TO ATTACK US AS SOON
AS THE ROAMERS WERE
CLEARED OUT, ANYWAY.
WHO KNOWS WHO HE
WOULD HAVE
KILLED.

FUCK
HIM,
Y'KNOW.



STILL,
KINDA
THROWS THE
WHOLE "YOU KILL,
YOU DIE" THING
OUT THE
WINDOW,
HUH?

MAYBE
YOU SHOULD
RETHINK YOUR
"NO KILLING"
STANCE.



YEAH.

LETTER HACKS

WRITE TO US AT:

THE WALKING DEAD
C/O FUNK-O-TRON
P.O. BOX 54386
LEXINGTON, KY 40555-4386

OR

WALKINGDEAD@FUNKOTRON.COM

Big news time here at The Walking Dead Central. The Eisners were very kind to us this year. The book received not one but two nominations. One to Charlie Adlard as best penciler/inker and one to Tony Moore for best cover artist. These guys bust their humps all year long and both really deserve these nominations, congrats, guys.

In other news, I've been trying to keep a lid on this, because, well, I got letters about it... complaining, but I just got numbers and we're still going up, we haven't stopped going up... this book just keeps selling better. As I stated before I don't say this to brag, I just say this because I know, the only readers that actually read this, care, you guys like the book. I figure you guys would like to know that the book you enjoy is on solid ground. So I just wanted to let you know. Now back to your regularly scheduled program.

Oh, and before I start into the mail I gotta say, I recently signed up for "Blockbuster Online" the mail order DVD rental thing... and it's totally sweet! As a guy who really doesn't think to highly of leaving the house the future sure is turning out pretty cool. Between khepri.com, Amazon.com, Ebay, and this... and my wife buying groceries... I almost never need to leave the house. I'm a shut in! WOO!

Letters? Yeah, sure--we'll answer some of those... let's go.

Dear Dead Crew,

Wow! What else can you possibly throw at us? (I probably shouldn't have asked that)

Your book has the best characterizations that I've read in a long time. Characters are what give every great comic, novel and film staying power, something you can read or watch over and over again. Like with Romero's Dawn of the Dead, all the fans will tell you they watched it a hundred times because of Peter, Roger, Flyboy, and Fran. People actually cared what happened to them, and because it kicks ass all over today's cardboard cutouts. I read the Walking Dead every month anticipating what is going to happen to Rick and the Gang every month. Rich is definitely the headliner, but without everyone else the book wouldn't be as exciting, compelling nor as interesting. Hell, with the good writing you could put a chimp in the lead role and still sell crazy amounts of the book. Your characters are worth remembering.

I have just a few questions for you guys,

- 1.) What books inspired you guys to get into comics?
- 2.) Who is your favorite Romero actor?
- 3.) Any good convention horror stories?

Robert- keep up the awesome writing, and I love reading Letter Hacks, don't ever get rid of em'.

Charlie- top of the line, you bring the writing to life(or dead)

Tony-BAD ASS Covers!

Thanks putting out a quality book,

Gary Timmons

Bear
Lake, MI

Thanks for the letter, Gary.

- 1.) Charlie's busy, but for me it was Savage Dragon, hands down. I mean all comics in general helped but if I had to pick one... it'd be Dragon. That's just a GREAT comic book. And fuck that guy for become publisher of Image so I look like a kiss up when I say that.
- 2.) Duane Jones, from Night of the Living Dead... followed closely by Ken Foree, and an honorable mention goes to Tony Todd for the Night of the Living Dead 1990 remake.
- 3.) Nah, nothing crazy's every happened to me.

Kirkman and Letter Hacks,

First, let me get past the obligatory cliché of longtime reader, first time writer. I was a kid when I first saw the original Dawn of the Dead, and I've been a zombie fan ever since. I've never cared for the zombies that ask you if they can eat your brains, so those movies never did much for me, and there's been somewhat of a hole where that genre should've been in my life. I somewhat enjoyed the new Dawn of the Dead, as well as 28 Days Later, but still couldn't get past how bodies that were decomposing could pull off a full sprint. That's where TWD comes in. I gave it a chance with issue #1, and I've gotten every issue and collection ever since. I love the idea of the 'zombie movie' never ending. TWD has been a shot of much needed fun, and I've since completed my DVD collection of zombie movies as well as The Zombie Survival Guide, all of which rest with my collection of TWD. Thank you for that.

A couple of questions - First off, What (or Who) exactly is in the prison freezer? With your past storylines, I can't seriously believe that it was just used as the crapper. It's been four issues since they slickly avoided opening that door, and the anticipation of that answer is killing me.

Oh, come on... sometimes a cigar is just a cigar. It was a crapper... they pooped in the freezer. There's just nothing more to it. Sorry.

Secondly, when will you do us all a favor and revive Marvel's Nova? It appears that you're somewhat of a fan, and I'm curious if you're interested in doing Nova correctly, and if you've considered approaching Marvel about it?

I dig Nova a lot and I'd love to do a Nova series some day. Right now though, Zeb Wells and Scottie Young have a New Warriors series going on that features the ol' human rocket. Check it out.

Aloha and keep up the great work,
Gordon Fernandez

P.S. - This is a work email address, so if this letter is printed, could you please omit the address? I'm not a

full
time writer yet, and
I still desperately need this job. :)

The address is omitted. Your job is safe. But really--you think your boss is reading this?

Oh captain my captain,

I am another of the "new to comics" people if you don't count the one I owned at 13. Well I am a little let down by the end of #16. Thomas was a dead give away as the killer. He looks like an older Jeffery Dahmer. Another thing is that if there are zombies outside the fence why don't the people stab them in the head with sharpened homemade weapons through the fence?

Well, that came up a couple issues later... see, my finger's on the pulse.

They are in a prison there has to be a shiv there somewhere. Also my other beef is with Charlie. Charlie is getting much better as the comic grows but it seems as if all the zombies are all bald guys. It is looking like a chrome dome convention.

Bah, Charlie's doing fine. Some zombie's are bald, but not all... take a look, you'll see tons of non-bald zombies.

All right I have beaten you up enough, time for the praise. I thank you and as well as a chorus of others. This is a terrific story. I look forward to this every month. I have even gotten two of my high school math students hooked on the Kirkman crack as I like to call it. I gave them a taste of TPB one and two and after told them they would have to get there own if they want more. I am following your model. You are also a shrewd businessman. You start with the prices low and when they are hooked then you got them where you want them. Then Rob, you do the letters column to stretch out the experience. You sure you didn't sell drugs in a past life. At the website I post www.allthingszombie.com you are the second most viewed thread on the site. Sorry Romero's "Land of the Dead" is number one. Many members join and yours is the thread they post.

Right now we are taking dibs on who is swinging in #18. We think it is a toss up between Hershel and Andrew. I call dibs on Hershel; the guy has lost five kids. He has got to be F&*%ed. Another member and I are making an index of people on The Walking Dead to help those confused by which character is which. If you want, take a look and tell us what you think. It is at awfulman.mine.nu/twd/

Well a letter wouldn't be complete without questions.

1) Are you wallowing in money from Paramount's Invincible buy?

2) If there are so many rotten corpses running out there wouldn't the be an pandemic of flies around? (Feel free to cut his out if you want to use the idea)

3) There seem to be more and more scenes like Dale\Andrea, Lori\Carol, prison shower. Does death make them horny or is it me?

Sincerely,

Gary Skellington

1) Not really. I could always use more money.

2) Man, I know I've gotten this question before... there're flies out there... we'll see them.

3) It's... just... you.

Hello again, Kirkman,

I just read TWD 16, and you just keep making this book better and better! There's so much going on now, it's hard to keep it all

straight. Not that I'm complaining or anything...

I'm glad to see we're finally getting to learn about the convicts a bit. We've got the pervy one, the psycho one, and the two gay ones (one of which I'm sure will go straight again). You had me kind of lulled me into a sense of security about them until the end of last issue. I guess it's naive of me, but I got the feeling that

even
though they were convicts, they wouldn't pose a big threat to the others. After all, in their current situation, what would they have to gain by killing off the few people that were remaining in the world? Now that we know Thomas is the one chopping heads off, I'm interested to find out what his motivation is. Does he think he'll benefit from what he's doing, or is he just mentally disturbed? Now that we know he's the attacker, I'm sure the rest of the cast will find out soon enough. I'm guessing Dexter, who everyone accused of killing Hershel's girls, will end up saving the day for the rest of them, building their trust in him, but maybe you'll surprise me.

Speaking of heads being chopped off, I have to commend Charlie on his art on page 3. I loved the subtle movement of the girls' eyes before they started trying to talk. That was just magnificent!

And Tyreese somehow survived?!? That was certainly unexpected. I certainly thought he wanted to die the way he ran right into the center of a roomful of zombies. I can't imagine how he survived. I know he's told Rick that he doesn't really know how he did it, but I'm hoping it'll come back to him, and we might get a chance to see it through a flashback or something. I think that would be a great scene to see!

Then, to top it all off, we get some sweet lesbo action! Is Lori going to cheat on Rick again, only with a woman this time?!? I know there wasn't much to it, but I still thought it was an interesting little scene to throw in there. I can't help but think there was a reason for it, and it's a precursor of things to come.

I also enjoyed the page toward the end where Tyreese explains to Rick how all of them are dead. I know you've explained in the letters page that the title doesn't refer to the zombies, but it was nice to see the characters recognizing the same thing within the story. Tyreese has a completely different attitude toward their situation than I thought he did when Julie died. It's nice to see him back and know that he has a firm grip on their reality.

Finally, in your letters page you said the characters are going to try to figure out how everyone is turning into zombies. I'm really looking forward to that! I can't wait to see what kinds of ideas they come up with and learn along with them what the "rules" are in your world.

The characters are going to learn the zombie "rules" as they go along but they'll never find out how... at least, that's the plan.

Thanks for another great read! Keep up the good work!

Jim Amato

PS - I'm interested in some of Charlie Adlard's original art. You said you could forward our e-mail to Charlie, so please send mine. I'd like to see what he's got available and how much it costs... I'm sure he's gotten lots of inquiries on it, so he may not have much left. Thanks!

If you want to buy Charlie's original art, email me the address above with "original art" in the subject. When they're at the bottom of a normal letter like this one... I won't see it until I put this letters column together. If you put that in the subject I'll forward the request right on to Charlie.

Dear Robert-

Your comic book "The walking dead" rocks! Its truly awesome!

But riddle me this...why isn't it mentioned on

the image comics web site? And why aren't the ship dates mentioned anywhere? Bummer!

Dude, keep up the awesome work!

Jonz

I guess the Image site just sucks! Seriously though... there's some stuff on there some times... including my message board, check it out.

Robert,
Charlie, Cliff... etc.

I just wanted to finally write to my favorite comic to say thanks. I have been waiting for a story like this for my entire zombie obsessed life. Let me get a few things out the way real quick before I get to the heart of the matter.

Robert: I was so pissed off when you "killed" Tyreese ONE ISSUE after you said you wouldn't be killing anybody off for awhile in Letter Hacks. Well I guess the joke was on me since you got exactly the reaction I am sure you were hoping for. Oh well, fool me once... well you know the rest.

HAH! Got you.

Charlie: I have to admit that I didn't like your initial start on this book. It was quite a shock going from one style to another and that is one of my biggest beefs with most "mainstream" comics (who seem to switch artists every other month). Looking back at those issues now I can see just how hard you were trying to make the world come to life in your own way. I didn't notice all the little things going on in the background of many issues until I re-read them. Now I can honestly say that I really like your work and I hope you stick around for some time to come. Your zombies are great... gory, rotten, bloated, and horrid! Everything I need out of the walking dead!

Cliff: I don't think I have ever seen anyone give you the respect you deserve for your excellent work in gray. It gives the entire book a sense of depth, gloom, and despair that might otherwise be lacking without. Keep up the excellent addition to this already excellent comic and everything will be .. uhm .. excellent.

Now to my question. Since I know many intelligent zombie fans read this thing and I have yet to see any real discussion... this has to do with a Romero classic. My favorite of the trilogy (and maybe of all zombie films) is Day Of The Dead. It gets so many things right, especially in the characters it portrays. But while discussing the movie recently with a coworker we both stumbled on something. Romero likes to work in civil rights undertones in all of the Dead pictures, but we had a hard time figuring out what it was in Day Of The Dead. Then we realized it was the character of Pvt. Miguel. Everyone assumes he was dating or sleeping with Sarah in that movie, because they shared a room, but what if he was actually gay? Maybe that is why the rest of the men in the complex had such a distaste for him, and Sarah was smart enough to let him stay in her room as a disguise. At the end of the film we see him clutching his rosary beads and crucifix as he is torn apart by zombies who then destroy the remaining men alive in the complex. He was in so much denial and anguish over his homosexuality and it's sins against god that he finally gave himself over to his retribution. Sure this all seems a little out there, but so are a lot of things in the film. If you are still not convinced just think back to the scene where Miguel slaps Sarah across the face and says, "You bitch!!"

Y'know... most of the time when people do this they end up sounding like a real crackpot... but y'know... I think this kinda makes sense. I'm going to have to watch the movie again with this in mind. Thanks.

Well I hope it gives you something to think about if nothing else. Actually maybe you should just get back to work on creating this awesome comic for me to read every month. Leave it up to the fans and readers to argue about this one.

Randall Davis

Dear Robert:

Hi - huge zombie-aholic here. Although I've been a fan of comics for over 20 years now, I have never written in before. (Bullshit, of course you have... liar.) Your book has made me change that...I can't even begin to

explain the excitement I get from reading your book. I am happy to say that I have been a reader since issue #1 hit the rack and haven't had to go through too much torture of tracking down a back issue - that is until I went out to sea for a few months. Our Strike Group headed out in October and I was forced to wait around until March to see where TWD was going. Needless to say, it was well worth the wait...the newest storyline about the prison is your best stuff yet. The only good thing about being gone for 5 months is that I can get to read 4 issues all in one sitting.

I have to admit, when Rick went back to take out Shane (again), I thought he also might have it in mind to try and track down Morgan and Duane and getting the only other people he had met into the 'good life' of the prison...looks

like he's got other things to worry about now.

Keep up the great work and I'll be sure and do my part to spread the word to other comic readers...now if I can just get the comic book store folks to quit referring to me as 'the walking dead' guy...

v/r,
LT Allen Adkins, USN

Right on.

Letter Hacks,

This is the first time I've ever written to a comic. Well, except for all those other times. (see, that's what I'm talking about.)

You've established in Invincible that there are parallel Earths, right? And in Invincible's Earth, there's that bloke who looks like Richard E Grant's Doctor Who living in the sewers and animating corpses, with limited success. So it stands to reason that on one of the parallels, Richard E Grant is a bit more successful; to the point that he's managed to accidentally create a zombie apocalypse!

See? Total crackpot.

And you said that you'd never go into the cause of the zombie plague. The clues were there all the time! You cunning scamp, you!

Even though I've now resoundingly busted open the central mystery, I'm still loving the comic. It's truly a great read. One question though: the gang are worried about running out of ammo and weapons, but they're in a prison in the US. Surely there's going to be guns and ammo lying around all over the shop, or was this a fuzzy liberal prison in which the guards were only armed with stern words and good intentions? Surely the copper should have thought of this by now?

Oh, and have you thought about digest-sized collections? I know your books are around the same price as the manga collections anyway, but you might get some crossover success from the otaku. Plus it's fashionable, innit?

kelvin green

Eh, I don't really want to have two different kind of collections out there. Digest-sized trades are fine but I really like full-sized comics... I like to keep the format alive.

Hello Richard, I'm Phill and I love the series! I love how you take a bad situation and make it so much worse in the story. When are you going to make it to any Florida ComicCons? I would love to meet the man who brought us the comic fanboys one of the best zombie series that has hit the comic book shelves. You give me a reason to go and still buy comic titles. I'm not here to bash but I lost alot of respect for major comic companies such as Marvel and DC with some of their hair-brained ideas to spicen up some of their already existing titles. Anyways, you brought us a title we can build with and keeps us hungry for more. Good job and thank you for bringing me back to the world of comics,

Your Faithful read,
Phill

Florida, eh? My parents live down there... I'm sure I'll make it down there on an official capacity sooner or later. If any con promoters are reading this... EMAIL me.

Mr. Kirkman,

I thought it was about time I wrote to say just how much we think of your wonderful comic. My wife and I are avid readers of comics, collecting between 30 and 40 titles a month. Yours is one of the best, and you're in good company too. I'd rather chew my right hand off than pick between Rex Mundi, Y The last man, and Walking dead.

We didn't pick up right away. With reading so many books on our pull list already and past geek books never really panning out, we were skeptical. However all the new geek movies out (28 Days Later, Shaun Of The

Dead, and Dawn Of The Dead), reminded us of our love for the genre and we folded. I picked up the first trade and half way into the first issue I was hooked. After reading it through in one setting, I promptly handed it to my wife and suggested she stop whatever she was doing to read this book, ASAP. Since then we've gotten caught up, now reading monthly.

What zombie fan hasn't wondered what this kind of world would be like day in, day out? What zombie fan hasn't fantasized about their own world gone dead, you're main concern just staying alive, hour to hour? This excellent work takes us far beyond what any movie ever has, exploring a world of the dead in a way no other medium could. Well displayed is the uncertainty of such a world. We never know who's going to die from issued to issue. It's safe to say the majority of characters are fair game. I think you have a story to tell about Rick and he'll be around for a while, but I'm not all that certain you won't axe him, when his story plays out. The monthly cliffhangers are hell and we love them!

An interesting point to note is your willingness to print the names of and talk about other comics in your letter pages. Something most books will not do. I think this shows your love of comics and comfort level with your own work. BTW, kudos on your huge letters page as it's almost as fun to read as the book itself. Your dedication to not whoring your work by expansion simply for monetary gain is admirable as well.

Yeah, I hope you fuckers like this shit because I'm not even half way don't and I've been doing this for over an hour. You bastards BETTER like these things.

Your hard work and imagination have earned you two more loyal readers. We're not going anywhere, we want to see how it ends (not too abruptly of course).

Well, enough ass kissing for one letter. Our best to you and your crew,

Chad & Venessa Cayler

No, no... more ass kissing, please.

Robert Kirkman.

Great comic, I've been reading since issue five, (Ordered issues 1-12 over amazon, each in Volumes, also currently ordered Vol.3 which goes from 13-18), and I say, so far it's pretty good, including the fact it's more than a mindless gun and run comic. But overall it's wonderful and keep it up, (Please don't kill Glenn :(for some reason he's Da bomb!).

I didn't kill him THIS issue? Is that enough?

Anyways the reason I'm actually contacting you is the fact how infection spreaded without bites or scratches on Chris and Julie also Hershel's two daughters and Shane. I Managed to buy issues 15-16 (Couldn't wait for the damn Vol.3) and well a bit surprised at how the five died. I mean the so-called virus couldn't be airborne? So it has to be water borne, meaning some stupid zombie fell into a lake or major water reserve and contaminated it. Also animals, animals drinking the water itself must have

spreaded the infection when humans (Such as Shane) hunted and ate the animals (Deers, rabbits, etc.). I Mean it dose seem logical besides one part, what prevents infection from happening? Why after death? I'm stumped on that part so far, but yet I could be wrong?

Man, this must be crackpot month.

Anyways, good luck on the series and rock on man.

P.S. If you can, add a bit more humor tho, I mean sometimes the comic feels a bit morbid with death happening twenty-four seven.

-Michael Slate

I'll see about making things a bit more funny. The letters columns are funny sometimes right? Sometimes?

Hey Robert,

At first I wanted to jump on the "I never wrote a letter to..."-train, but then I wrote a letter to Pigtales Ovi so that I would be a "letter to the editor veteran"

writing to you. But hey let's talk about the book, I'm hooked up since #1 smiled at my in my favorite comic shop...I wasn't that long into comics by then and still had to find the right thing for me, since I'm not that much in to superheroes...and there was TWD, what a title sounded similar to half the movies of my dvd collection, so I bought it and that brought me here.

I finally found out yesterday what makes your book so special to me, that's why I write this letter...it's the same thing that made me fall in love with Joss Whedon's Buffy series. All the seasons deal with characters and how they live with their problems and each other, and as a gimmick there's a monster every episode and a bigger one at the end of the season, and that's how your book is to me. A great story about several people in a miserable situation dealing with their life... plus zombies. I totally love your characters and how unpredictable they sometimes are!!

There is something about the letters you get I do not understand, why do people keep asking if we will learn more about this/that, and if we see more of Morgan and Duane? To me it's not knowing what happens next issue what makes me walk much faster home if I got a new TWD copy at the shop. Why would anybody know what happens before the new issue is published? But maybe that's just my problem.

Some people are weird... you read this letters column right?

So no questions from me this time.

Keep up the good work (charlie, cliff and tony too of course) that is done to craft one of my favorite books on the market.

Cheers Tilmo
Germany, Aachen

Thanks for the letter... um... Cheers.

Rob,

I had to wait a few extra weeks before I got my copy of Walking Dead #16 (my local comic shop, which I've since given up on, never got copies in and I just said, "what's up with that?"). It was worth the wait, and then some. I've written before, even been published before, so I don't even care about that (though it is a natural feather in my cap). I just needed to write and say while I love this series, and every issue gets better and better, that when Rick opened the door to the cell I had goosebumps. That is, in my ever so humble opinion, the greatest moment I've ever read in comic book history!

Thank you for that.
Mike Coughlin

Thanks.

Letter Hacks,

Woweeeee.
I just don't know where to begin with this letter. There is so much going on in your book right now! I was finally able to pick up the last two issues. The girly side of me wanted to crawl up in a corner and cry at the end of 16 but I was brought back to my senses at the very end of 17. Let's just say that I'm looking forward to Rick's promise of beating the murderer to death. And from the looks of the cover for 18- justice is definitely being served. At least I hope it's Thomas he's beating all to hell.

Speaking of the covers... Tony's work is more and more amazing every time a new issue comes out. I couldn't stop looking at 17's cover. There is so much detail to take in there. He's incredible with the coloring. Which is just enough. The rest of the book doesn't need it. The tones are perfect. If anything color would only take away from the true grit of this story. I'm glad you refuse to publish this in color, Robert.

I've never been so impressed with Charlie's work as I was in 17. He's really nailed it. The expressions, the action... each character has their own face. I just can't get enough of it. I take back any negative thing I've ever said about him. Charlie, if I could find my shoes I'd

eat
them both and smile while
doing so.

Cliff, your gray tones are as gorgeous as ever.

The fangirl in me is screaming and jumping for joy that Tyreese isn't dead. Scared me there for a minute! Lori is still pissing me off. Good job with that. I hope I wasn't that bitchy while I was pregnant. Carol kissing Lori really surprised me. Something tells me we haven't seen the end of that little moment. You better prepare yourself for some hate mail if Lori does anything to jeopardize Rick's dwindling sanity, Robert.

Who am I kidding? I'm no good at hate mail. ;)

Okay, I'm going to quit rambling on but I do want to ask one question. Where is Patricia? We didn't see any more of her after her little talk with Thomas. Man, I hope Andrea is okay!

Well, until tomorrow! You'll undoubtedly be receiving another email from me after reading 18.

Jenn Lee

By now you know exactly where Patricia is.

Hey there,
First off AWESOME BOOK GUYS. This is my first year reading comics. I always thought they sucked. But a friend of mine knows I am a huge zombie fan and told me about your books. So I bought the first TPB and read it. Then the next day got on Ebay and Bought Issues 1-8 and from then on I bought it every month. I just got issue 17 and I saw in the back you talking about posters. I WOULD BUY EVERY SINTGLE ONE YOU PRINTED! Lol. Do it! POSTERS POSTER POSTERS!!!

Mail me a check and we'll talk. I am looking into posters, though... I'll keep you all, um... posted.

Dear Kirklan...I mean KirkMAN,

Still love the book! No "Atilla The Hun-gry", no "Charlie Manson is President", no "Dangerous Zombies in the last few issues"...

WTF Dude? Did you change your mind and decide and decide to do a comic adaptation of "OZ"? The black prisoners are going to stage an uprising??? Please don't do it, you and I both know real people are a lot more reasonable than that and it just seems cliched. Or is it your way of stroking HBO's ego to get a series out of them?

Maybe I just suck. That's not out of the realm of possibility.

That's it for complaints, but you should really hound those guys for a show! Use HBO's offices in Atlanta; utilize JPM Productions out of Atlanta for shooting and effects; shoot it just out side of Atlanta... It makes sense, trust me! I need a spooky fix from HBO now that "Carnivale" is done.

I wholeheartedly agree.

Now questions:

1) You're not going to make the book LESS talky just because some other fans don't like to read are you? That would suck AND hurt character development.

No, no... not at all. The book is what it is. There was just some action stuff to get out of the way. So it got a little less talking for a few issues. It should be back to its balloon filled majesty soon enough.

2) What conventions are you hitting this summer? If any of us track you down and pull a Marc Silvestri (ask him how he got into the biz) is that cool??

I know all about how Marc got in the biz and I think it's best if I dash your hopes now by saying I'm married... AND I'm not really into that. I'll be at San Diego and Baltimore for sure, and I'll probably hit Chicago also... but I'm not sure just yet (95% sure I'll be there).

3) How much longer are we going to have to sit in this boring assed prison? Get them the fuck on the road!!! You can't very well replenish your cast if they all die in prison, now can you?

Stick with it... you'll like what's coming. Sheesh... have a LITTLE faith.

4) Why don't you EVER pay homage to other horror classics? Name someone Barbara, or use the "kicks much ass for the lord" line in the book instead of the letters column.

I think some times that stuff distracts from the story. I did name that kid in the first issue Duane Jones. I'm sure you'll see a Barbara before too long.

5) Have you joined the Zombie Hunting Society yet? We know you want to!

Nope... I'm just too stinkin' busy!

Michael Riedlinger
ZS Reservist

Kirkman,

First off, I'm going to have to agree with some previous letters and say I definitely want a poster from this series. Any of the covers would be great, and issue 17 was one of my favorites. Also I'm glad to see that TWD is on a slightly less chaotic schedule. If anyone else gets tired of waiting for the next Walking Dead comic to come out, I did find the perfect solution...buy Invincible! Anyway, I was happy to see Thomas' face pounded into mush last issue. It's bad enough that they have to deal with the zombies. If only Rick had remembered that there really are no black serial killers, its always the creepy looking white guy. Hopefully they don't throw him to the zombies though, you'd hate to give them more of a reason to hang around the prison. I'm thinking that in trying to get the riot gear, they're going to set a bunch of prisoner-zombies free.

Man... I just can't fool you guys these days can I? I'm going to have to try harder for the next few issues. You guys are really keeping me on my toes these days.

Well, thanks for the excellent stories and be sure to print my letter since it'll be a good Invincible plug. There's no reason we all shouldn't be reading both comics (alright, I'll stop sucking up).

Andy Robak

Consider your letter printed Andy. And thanks for the Invincible plug. It's hard to cross-promote the two because they're such vastly different books, but if any of you out there like superhero comics, and since you're already reading a comic I'm sure there's a good chance some of you do, give Invincible a shot. If you don't like it... hey, you're only out three dollars.

Letter Hacks,

Better by the issue, an understatement, but pretty

true. I thought things were getting pretty heated with Hershel's kids getting offed & revisiting Shane, but the way Rick pummeled the hell out of Thomas was amazing! Charlie & Cliff did wonders with that double page spread, beautiful. Glad to see Glenn and the boys getting pretty creative with things, and Carl & Sophia going out; hope they don't fall into it too early...17 issue in and a hell of a ride so far.

1) How many different ways can you kill a zombie?

73

2) If you had to kill a zombie, how would you do it?

Magnets.

3) If the world was overrun with zombies, would you still write comic books?

Probably not. In fact, I can't think of a better reason to quit.

4) Do zombies even like comic books?

Do actors like the movies they're in?

5) Are their any zombie dogs and cats around? Can Carl have one?

No, there will be no zombie animals in this book.

6) What's the strangest zombie thing you know of?

Zombie toothpaste. Google it.

7) When can we expect zombie Kirkman, Moore, Adlard & Rathburn to show up?

That's already happened. You must have missed it.

-Mike Storniolo

Kirkman,

I just finished reading Walking Dead #17, and have been with you since #1, so I guess all of the praise and acclaim for the writing, art and book in general can be taken as read. This is, undisputably, my favorite book on the market. There.

I basically decided to write because of a couple of comments you made in your letters page in #17 that I wanted to respond to.

First you mentioned how lucky horror fans are to be alive now because of the massive number of horror movies being released these days. I completely agree with that (even though many of them are crap, that is the lot of horror fans to sift through the crap for the rare and precious bits of gold) except for the fact that it isn't really luck. It's politics. Or maybe sociology is a better word. In times of great political/social strife, there is always a rise in the number of horror movies on display. For example: The beginnings of the Great Depression, gave us the Universal Horrors, Dracula, Frankenstein, etc. Post WWII we got a lot of radiation-nuclear monsters overrunning the earth type of movies and space age sci-fi horrors. In the 60s and 70s we had the racial tensions of the civil rights movement as well as Viet Nam, (protests, social anxiety and family unit melt-downs galore) which brought about such classics as Night Of The Living Dead, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre and many others. Of course the Cold War/Reagan/Nuclear Paranoia years was the era of dime-a-dozen slasher movies, most greatly exemplified by the Friday the 13th and Nightmare on Elm Street franchises. (For fear of getting too political it is prudent to point out that in the prosperous and reasonably peaceful Clinton years there were almost no new horror movies to be found.) So now, I believe we owe our current crop of sometimes brilliant horror to the tragedy of 9/11, the new war in the Middle East and our failing economy. (Is it an accident that Amityville, a film with a great deal of subtext dealing with the financial burdens of a young family just making their start, has been remade and released just as tensions about the war are beginning to wane and people are starting to worry about gas prices in excess of \$2.00 a gallon?) I think this would be a great thesis, that somebody should write an article, or maybe a book on. Not me though. I prefer to stick to fiction.

This all makes sense.

Which brings me to the other thing I wanted to say. (Sorry, this letter is getting a lot longer than I intended.) You also mentioned in the letters page that you would kill off Rick if a situation ever presented itself where you thought it would be interesting to do so, without doing damage to the greater story as it is meant to progress. Well, way back in your first story arc, there was a moment where I knew, if I was writing this book, Rick would have died. I think it was pretty good and I think you might find it an interesting alternate path for the book. It's nothing you can use, obviously, but you might find it interesting. Rick never would have made it out of Atlanta. He would have met Glenn there, and Glenn would have tried to rescue him, but just when you thought they were going to make it, Rick would have been killed. How, doesn't matter. We would then follow the surviving but possibly somewhat traumatised Glenn back to camp where the issue would end as we see him greeted by Shane, Lori and Carl, who we would recognize from Rick's flash-backs. Heartbreaking, no? The story would have then continued more or less as it has, but with Shane replacing Rick as our hero. This would have left readers with the absolute certainty that ANYONE could die, from the very beginning. Also, it would have left us at the end of the issue with a set of familiar leads which we would recognize from the first issue, who could carry the story forward without having to develop brand new leads to replace the one we lost. That would have been pretty cool, no? And tragic. Probably stronger than the happy family reunion ending, which I felt came a little too soon and a little too easily. But that's just my opinion, and I feel you've far more than made up for that one tiny misstep.

Misstep? Bah, I liked that scene. I think you've got a good

idea here, and it would have been cool, but the book needed an anchor for readers to latch on to. Killing off our focus that early could have alienated people. Plus, you'd miss all the cool things Rick's done sense. I did think about killing Rick in issue six instead of Shane, but again... decided against it. He'll die when I'm ready just like all the rest. You'll love it.

Anyway, you also said in that page that you'd like some more challenging letters to keep things fresh. Hopefully, this was one.

Keep them coming,
--Corby Daniel

PS: It freaked me out when you had those two little girls decapitated!! That took some fucking balls. I'm so glad I read this book!!

I got balls bigger'n Texas, baby!! You can see them from space. Just wait until next issue.

Zombiologists,

This one was dark from the get go. Even with the sex in the gym, the innocent kiss, and Dale's half-hearted attempts at reducing the numbers of the zombie horde (especially the mashed-into-the-fence bit...), the issue was just weighted down with pending menace. Maybe it's just the growing darkness of their reality. I'm not sure, but I do know I realized this issue was pivotal before I read your intro to the letters page.

Robert Kirkman, pointing out the obvious since 1978.

Also seems to me they may end up hanging the wrong man, at least for the murder of Hershel's girls. His dialogue was all wrong, not to mention the implement he chose for his assault would have been useless in removing a head. No, I think the girls died at the hands of someone much closer to them. MUCH closer.

Since when can you not cut a head off with a knife? A big, sharp, knife? True, it'd take a lot of cuts, but it could be done.

Of course I could be way off...

You just might be.

Somehow I missed the Lord of the Flies parallels, but,

now that I see them, I'm eager to see what you do with them. For all intents and purposes, they might as well be stranded on an island.

I'm losing my appreciation of the prison as a homestead. Maybe because its' symbolic weight is becoming a large part of the overall darkness of the work. Now that they are prisoners, seems they're likely to become emotional zombies themselves, feeding off of the building tensions that are inevitable in such stark, limited confines.

Stick with it. The prison is cool.

Can't say I shared your fondness for the art. For the first time I noticed Cliff's wonderful use of gray scaling far more than Charlie's art. The art was fine, it just felt off to me. Sorry, even as an artist I can't quite put my finger on what about it didn't work for me. Maybe it was that Charlie's anatomy seemed off more than usual. Sorry, can't figure it out.

To each is own, I suppose.

Looking forward to 18.

Thanks, guys, for a continually moving experience.

Later,
Chip

P.S. Could I suggest a roster with thumbnail portraits at the beginning or ending of each issue. I suck at names, and all I can remember is Rick and Lori's names. I have to hunt through the issues if characters aren't named in each issue.

Already done. How's that for service? It won't be in EVERY issue, but it'll be in most.

Greetings
yet again Deadheads(wait, that name's
already taken innit?)

Sadly, yes.

Anyway, issue 17. Pretty good stuff gentlemen. Loved the scene with Carl and Sophia. Oh and Rick beating the shit out of Thomas wasn't half bad either. Was that a tooth stuck in his hand? Nice.

That was a tooth, yes siree.

Oh, by the way, Sea of Red was pretty friggin cool. The art was very different than most the stuff out there and the story was pretty intriguing (though it kinda bugged me that Marco turned just from being bitten. But that's just nitpicking.) So thanks for the recommendation. I'll keep checkin' it out.

I'm trying to keep the back covers of this book as ads for books I highly recommend from Image. So if you see it on the back cover, I think it's going to be great. I pick each back cover with care... so don't think I'll advertise any old book back there.

One last thing. The poster is a fuckin SPLENDID idea. Make it. NOW DAMMIT!!!! And action figures too! With friggin kung-fu grip! Kung-fu grip and realistic head exploding action! Yeah, that's it. I'm so fucking brilliant.

I'll look into the action figures.

Well, I've rambled enough. Keep on doing that thing you do. And get to work on the action figures. Millions are at stake!

-Mike Capuano

I'm into millions... so don't worry, I'll check into it.

Mr. Kirkman (and co.),

I have to say that after finishing issue 17, I am just awe-struck. You have created such a vast, complex and detailed world in such a relatively short time. I cannot remember the last time anything besides a beautiful woman held my attention this long.

Dude... we're up there with BEAUTIFUL WOMEN?! We must be doing something right.

Keep up the fantastic work!! As far as the people that seem to be getting ready to bitch about the release schedule for these books, tell them to fuck off. The Walking Dead is like a fine meal. I've never walked into a 5 star restaurant and kicked in the kitchen door to make the chef hurry up my with my filet mignon, so why the hell would I ask you to rush one damn bit past the pace that best allows you to tell this amazing story?

One completely hooked fan,
Mike Conners

Well, as far as the schedule goes we've hit another snag with Charlie having his second child (congrats mister Adlard). We're skipping the month of August in solicitations so we can keep up. We're a month behind so the book will still ship in August, but we'll be on time after that. I'm not going to play the "you can't rush greatness" card. I want this book to be dead-on monthly more than anyone, trust me. Thanks for the support, though.

HOLY SHIT, MAN!!!

Rick is going off the deep end real damn quick! When he went out to re-kill (I guess that works) Shane, I thought it was a little bit nutty. In issue 17, I've come to realize that he's just bugfuck insane! He beat the tar outta that guy, then he says that he wants to hang him for all to see what happens to people who break the law in this New World Order that he's concocted in his mind over the last five or six months? He's turning into some kind of whacked-out, Hitler-esque wannabe dictator of the remnants of the human race. And he was such a nice guy at first, too...

This book is messed up. This is one of the most human stories I have ever read. I started to pick it up because it was the first comic I'd ever seen on the shelf that was about zombies, and the crazy thing about it is that I almost don't give a rat's ass that there are zombies in it anymore! It ranks right up there with Ennis' Preacher, that one guy who's name I can't remember for some reason's Midnight Nation, and White Wolf Game Studio's Demon: The Fallen Trilogy, by

Greg Stoltz,
who must have sold his soul for deep
inside knowledge of all things demonic. TWD is now my #1 favorite.

Not just because of the story, either. You bitch about having so many letters in Letter Hacks sometimes, but there are a lot of books and movies out there I never would have heard of if some of those letters hadn't been printed. I picked up and read Reign of the Dead and RotD: Apocalypse End, both of which are great, solely because people mentioned them in their letters. Admittedly, I was a little disappointed with the OVERLY MASSIVE amount of plugging that you did in #17, but I'm sure I'll be picking up a few of the non-Marvel titles you mentioned (sorry, I do love your writing, but I haven't read Marvel ever since that Maximum Clonage crap. It really killed them for me.)

Oh, come on... one minute you're telling me how great the letters column is for recommended reads and then you're complaining about me plugging some books? I'm telling you--there's a lot of good books out there. Give 'em a shot.

Anyway, like so many of your other readers, I have questions/ideas that will probably only get answered in round-about ways/not be used because they're not yours;

1) Kill Rick already. He deserves it. One of these nights, Lori should just feel pity for her husband because he's gone completely insane and blow his brains out in his sleep. Be nice about it, he still deserves a good, clean, quick, honorable death, not something horrific.

Man, you guys turn on people QUICK.

2) Is Tyreese hiding some plan of vengeance somewhere deep behind those eyes of his? I mean, he saw his daughter die, come back as a zombie, get re-killed by Rick, strangled Chris, waited until he came back so he could re-kill him, and plunged himself into a room full of zombies with nothing but a hammer, and lived through it all. Now he's all cheery and happy-go lucky (YATTA!), almost like he hasn't a care in the world.

Either he's gonna snap and kill Rick himself for some reason (it's always the quiet ones), or he's one tough, hardcore son-of-a-bitch. If I was one of the survivors, and he became our leader, right now I'd shit solid gold if he told me to.

Tyreese is mighty awesome. I'll just leave it at that.

3) I haven't heard hardly any mention of God or a higher power from any of the characters mouths, unless it was followed by dammit. Did any of them have any kind of religious beliefs before this zombie thing went down, and if so, how do they feel about it now? On the topic of religion, are there any crazy religious zealots out there, stockpiling armaments and destroying zombies by themselves or with groups? Or at the very least some bad-ass group of militant altar boys or something? Or preachers that believe this is God's will, and are trying to spread the word that mankind deserves a zombie plague for their sins (scratch that, enough people said you took the prison idea from Reign of the Dead, that would be too much)? Or groups of kids living all Lord of the Flies style?

Hershel is very religious. You'll be hearing more from him on the subject as time goes on. As for the other stuff... just keep reading.

4)Hasn't anyone else from the area near the prison thought about holing up there? It would seem like a good idea to me in that situation.

We'll be seeing more of the area around the prison later on in the series. All will be explained.

5) Is anyone with the proper medical know how and equipment even out there trying to find an answer to the zombie problem, cures, vaccines and the like? Boy, after all Hershel's been through, finding out it WAS a good idea to keep them zombies would break him, if he hasn't broken already...

There may be someone out there... but who knows if we'll ever see them.

6) If I was safely holed up in a prison or someplace during a zombie menace, and one of my friends/family members got killed and came back, I'd lock them down somewhere so I could see how long it took them to

decompose.

I figure it would help to know that, as by the time they decompose more than likely all the previous zombies would be gone, too. That, and I must admit I'd feel a sense of satisfaction at the ability to occasionally point and laugh at a few of my friends if they did something stupid and got themselves zombified. This doesn't seem to have crossed any of the characters' minds, though.

I think you are a heartless bastard.

7) Now I'll suggest a few things to all the readers who helped me find cool stuff. I highly recommend that everyone who reads this buys HBO's *Carnivale* Season 1 on dvd, and records all of the 2nd season episodes that are still On-Demand. Maybe if HBO gets even more money, there will be a TWD series on HBO one day. Also, pick up DC's *Blood of the Demon*. It's written by Will Pfeifer, from my home town. I think he even used to play live-action Vampire the Masquerade in the same group I did.

I've met Will, he's a good guy. I only watched one episode of *Carnivale* and it wasn't bad but I just never sought it out. I find that if you watch two episodes of an HBO show you're hooked for life... and there's only so many hours in the day.

Okay, thanks for listening! I'm very happy to hear that you already have plans for issue 25. That means I'll still get to read at least 8 more issues, hopefully plenty more! Can't wait to see Morgan and Duane again, and the aliens in #75 (okay, I do hope the alien thing is a joke, and not something you're serious about but making seem like a joke so as to throw us off when it actually happens).

Man, I've got plans for this book well past 50. As long as numbers hold this book will be around for a good long time. And yeah... the alien thing is a complete joke.

When the zombies arise, here's to the comic geeks taking over the world!
(chug, slam)
Dan Haskell
Rockford, IL

P.S. Obviously you've seen Yatta. Any idea what the hell G-R-double E-N-L is? GREENL?

It's PEOPLE! PEEEEOPLE!!!!

Dear, Mr. Kirkman

Before get into this, know that I love your comic. It is in contest for my favorite comic I've ever read. I met you at the Seattle Comic-Con a month or two ago. I was the dude in the Phantasm shirt, you might remember me, might not. Here we go.

I don't remember what I had for dinner last night. There's only room for comics up in this head of mine.

A few people in internet land have said that this book has racist-undertones. Saying that you are using it as a metaphor for people not listening to holocaust deniers. It has also been said that this book is very popular in white power circles. I googled the hell out of the last one, and can't find any evidence on it mind you.

Yeah, look... there's no racist-undertones in this book. The coolest guy in the book is black... or Asian depending on who you ask. It's women I hate. (That's a joke...damn it.)

I'm going to play devil's advocate for a second here. Issue 13's cover is perfect. You get to see Rick, the hero, blue eyes, blonde hair. (Rick has brown hair) A man trying to protect "his way of living", no matter what number of inhuman beings he has to exterminate. The zombies, a possible metaphor for how the Nazi's viewed the Jews? Inhuman, greed/driven for a single goal, no respect for life, etc. The Nazi's let themselves believe that the Jews, were in fact subhuman thus treating them like monsters. Some might say that that is what TWD is all about. (and they would be crazy.) Showing, and saying that it is ok to exterminate an entire race, as long as they are not human to you. Rumors saying that Tony Moore left the book because of this. (Are you kidding? Tony is the most racist cat I know. He's racilicious!) Racial views have not always been left out in the zombie culture obviously. Bela Lugosi, in *White Zombie*, using black Haitian zombies in his plantation. For instance, in the first

issue, you introduced the black father, Morgan, and black son. They have a bad car, live in a bad neighborhood. Of course Rick lets them stay, but it seems they are only welcome in the white neighborhood as long as they improve it for its owners and don't entertain any thoughts of settling there permanently. (This is insane) Stereotypes are fun too. The only two people of color in the prison, murderer, and crack head. (It was a prison for Christ's sake. Would you rather they were in for rape and poor dancing? The white guy was a serial killer!) Oh, and yah they're involved sexually. (See, that's not a stereotype! Right?) Tyreese was a tough football player. (should it have been hockey?)

I find myself not on board with some of these observations, as there are facts to point out their flaws. (I wish you had mentioned these facts. Send another letter.) To me, the villains are not only the zombies, but often ourselves. I personally view this book as survival story, with some undertone of good social commentary. If anything else just see it as one dude who is writing a good zombie story, one for the ages in fact. BUT, I just wanted to bring it to your attention and see if any of it holds weight with you? So Mr. Kirkman...do you put nationalistic, or racist undertones into this fine comic?

No. Not even close. Jesus.

PS...Posters are a must. Cloth patches with TWD logo (if you don't I will screen print em first!).

I'll look into it. If there is to be TWD merchandise... you'll hear it here first.

Back to the race thing for a minute... Tyreese was a used car salesman after a short football career. Morgan lived in a bad neighborhood... but hey I lived in a bad neighborhood at the time... and I'm white. The thing is, anyone could read anything into the context of this book if they tried hard enough. It just doesn't make it so.

Dear Robert and Charlie

I'm quite sure most readers will focus on the emotional fireworks in this the latest issue of *The Walking Dead*. BUT what impresses me the most, is the shrewd fashion in which you set up future storylines. Since Rick's group prison stay started, more and more "Roamers" have trickled their way to the prison's gates. Just now our survivors have discovered the fruits of their neglect. Of course they have had more immediate concerns. You add that to Dexter's statement about the hidden stash of weaponry and its obvious that the gates will give and that WAR is coming.

Rick's new unwritten law is kind of obvious in these savage new times. But I wonder what it'll do to little Carl's head. Dexter's evaluation of the group's sanity is not too far from the truth. Living between doom and gloom is sure to traumatize anyone.

Now that everyone has mentioned each and every zombie flick ever, it's up to me to invite a little controversy by bringing up a short film that had some of the most terrifying dead walkers ever. Even if at the end they turned out to be only dancing ghouls. Yes, I'm talking about that alleged child molester's video Thriller. You may or may not like Michael Jackson's music. But John Landis, director of *American Werewolf in London* did a great job and Rick Baker's make up was wonderful and ghastly.

I haven't seen that video in forever... I'll have to look that up.

Love Charlie's work. Page 2 panel 1 had a great but quiet emotional intensity. Once again keep Adlard chained to his drawing table and the regular title in b&w, but I'm rooting for a TWD annual in full color featuring Tony Moore in a one-off return.

As promised I bought the first two *Invincible* trades. I'll read them soon. I have a good feeling I'll like it too. TWD has become my favorite title by far. Still can't believe you are this good at only 26.

Bah, I'm really 47. I mean... do I LOOK 26?

Your loyal reader
Victor Rosario Fermaint

What happens when *Invincible* clashes with *The Walking*

Dead? You
will find out soon via snail mail.

Ooh! I can't wait!

Howdy, Mr. Kirkman,

Not being a fan of all things zombies, your comic flew under my radar. After reading great things about you, I gave your superhero comics a try. Not bad, I thought. Still I passed on your 'zombie' book. That is, until an uneventful 'fifth week event' caused me to skip most comics coming out in December.

With a few extra dollars in my pocket, I figured I'd give your zombie book a try. GREAT READING!!! After two TPB's and a handfull of issues, you've made me a zombie fan.

Jeff Ghearing

PS: I still think most zombie movies are crap. Prove me wrong!!! Patiently waiting for the Walking Dead movie.

You have obviously not seen the Romero flicks. Welcome aboard, though. It's good to have you.

Dear Robert Kirkman,
I just finished issue #17, and man was it ever intense! This is by far my favorite comic series, and each issue makes me love it even more. What I really love about what you and the art team are doing with The Walking Dead is show how these people are adjusting to this world they are forced to live in. There are no entirely good or bad guys (well, maybe Thomas), just people who are trying the best they can, but will end up making mistakes. You could have easily made Rick a perfect character that

was always solving the group's problems. Instead you are forming a real character who has definitely let his position get to him. I can't wait to see where he is in issue 75 (hopefully equipped with some anti-alien weaponry.) That is of course assuming that he lives that long...

Charlie Adlard,
You definitely knew what you were doing this issue. Rick's attack was awesome, you really made me feel his rage. That two-page spread was just too sweet as well.

Cliff Rathburn,
Mighty fine work on the grey tones again. I particularly loved how you "colored" that last page.

Tony Moore,
This may just be my new favorite Walking Dead cover, simply brilliant. I hope you can stay on as cover artist for the long haul.

Keep up the great work,
Isaac Milton

Thanks for the kind words all around.

Just read Issue 17. Have to say making posters is a fantastic idea. I'd buy one as long as it wasn't extremely gaudy which seems unlikely with The Walking Dead but I'll throw it out there as a caveat anyway. I'm trying to think of other merch I'd like to see... only two things I can think of would be either a sticker or static cling of some kind (Which would work in your benefit when everyone driving behind me on saw "The Walking Dead" looking back at them) or some kind of patch or something because it seems to be all the rage to pin and sew patches to book bags now a days. (Unless your school doesn't allow you to use knapsacks anymore, which is becoming more the case these days than it ought to be.)

Y'know... I think I may just look into that.

I actually picked up Sea of Red the same week Issue 17 and I read it before I read The Walking Dead (I subscribe to the save the best for last theory... and at the time Sea of Red was an unknown so I read it first.) so imagine my surprise when you mentioned it and how good it was in the letter hacks. I picked it up solely based on the artwork and how unusual it is. I mean as good as Jim Lee and the Kubert brothers are when every book looks exactly the fucking same I'll give anything or anyone with the balls to try something different a chance. The "gimmick" of a sort of red tinted sephia tone look aside, it turned out to be one hell of a book. I must see where this tale of vampire pirates will take me.

See, guys... I only recommend the best. Sea of Red is a great book... and if you like that... check out Strange Girl, coming in June.

I'm going to have to disagree with you on Runaways Vol. 2 being the perfect jump on point. When it came out I talked to my comic book guy and told him my reservations about

jumping
onto any book midway through and he assured me "Buy this book. If you don't like it I'll buy it back." which gave me that warm and fuzzy feeling. I told myself "If someone loves a book that much it has got to be at least half way decent." and I trusted this guy because after all he was doing the same with the TPB of The Walking Dead the second they hit shelves. So I read Runaways #1 vol 2 and I thought it was crap. I was totally going to take him up on his offer, but for the \$3 it's not worth it to ask him to buy it back even if I did feel vile for having read it. But after a week or so some voice in the back of my head said to give it another chance, so I found and read Runaways vol1 and thought it was the shit. I still think vol2 issue 1 is weak though. Especially when you compare it to any issue of vol 1. (though in reality Vol 1 did amp it up each and ever issue, so if issue 1 is the worst he has to offer we are goin to be in for a nice ride.)

Ah, you came around in the end. Runaways is great. I stand by my recommendation of volume 2 though. I love my BKV.

My favorite of the Vaughan books (Y the Last Man, Runaways, Ex Machina) is definitely Ex Machina. Something about the way he manages to weave the

political debate in a "super hero" book is remarkable. His

debates always seem to logically thought out you have to wonder if Vaughan isn't a god damn Vulcan because I can't help but think if he were an actual politician the world would be a much better place. Plus even if Ex Machina begins to suck a big one nothing, absolutley nothing will compare to the way I felt when I got turned that page and saw the last page of issue #1. I got teary eyed and no comic book has ever done that... ever. (Sorry dude zombies freak me out good and plenty but they don't make me teary eyed... paranoid sure, but never teary eyed.)

Ex Machina is a damn fine book.

And now on a completely unrelated topic, I find I'm most productive when I have certain key pieces of music playing so I'm wondering, do you listen to music when you write? If you do, do you have any particular favorites? I being a music director at my college's radio station I'm always trying to find out what people's music taste is so I can recommend other good music to them they might like, because in a way that is sort of my job.

I do listen to music while I write but it becomes background noise after a while. I listen to all kinds of music but my favorites right now would be Nick Cave, Neil Young, David Bowie... stuff like that.

-Jesse Mrozowski

I've never read Battle Pope, never been able to find it anywhere for sale, but does it feel a little odd now with the pope having just died?

Hey, I didn't kill the guy. June 2005 is the fifth anniversary of Battle Pope so that release has been planned for a while. June also marks my fifth year in the industry.

HOLY SPIT!!!!

The Walking Dead is NOT about zombies! Sure, sure it took me 17 issues to catch on but I am on board now! Funny I could have sworn that this book was about zombies... I had been wondering how you would extend the life of the comic past twenty or so issues, especially given the rate of death of the living characters, and the fact that living gets attacked by un-dead - repercussions ensue - can only be done in a limited number of ways.... But the zombies are only a secondary horde of characters... The really story is how a small group of the living will re-establish 'civil' society! FOR THE LOVE OF TOAST THAT IS BRILLIANT!

Needless to say I LOVE the book... and I now view your possibilities as limitless! What will the RULES be? How do you re-establish social norms in a society now crowded with the walking dead? Can the group avoid the same mistakes that lead the pre-zombie world astray? [These are rhetorical by the way]
Hell Kirkman, I liked the book before, I am completely hooked now! Good show!
I cannot end the letter without a tip of the hat to the art team... from the pure rage of Tony's cover to the intensity of Charlie and Cliff's interior. I simply cannot remember the last time human emotion was rendered with such passion. In a word thank you to the whole team!

-Jason Mazaik

[p.s. this is my first letter to a comic and some such non-sense if that aids my chances in being printed]

You are so totally full of shit. This isn't your first letter and I'm NOT going to print it... oh never mind. Sure... I'll print it.

Dearest Mr. "YOU KILL YOU DIE",

YOU KILL, YOU DIE! Or so I hear. Laying on the foreshadowing a bit thick, aren't we? I guess that's a staple of any zombie medium though. Why do I get the feeling Tyreese is going to be the victim of this mantra? Always gotta be the black guy, huh?!

Other than that, I'm lovin' it (to quote the worst ad campaign ever). One more method of feeding my zombie desires. I hope the series keeps up for quite a while. Though I believe your idea of zombie ***** ***** ***** has been taken already, by that new movie "Undead." Better luck next time.

- Andy "You kill, you die" H.

I edited your letter to delete some spoilers for the move "UNDEAD" I think it's a great flick and I'd hate to ruin any surprises for anyone out there.

Yo Hacks,

Everyone has been asking me about my opinion on "The Walking Dead" published from Image. Since Arrow produced one of comicdoms first on going zombie-Romero-esque style comics on the market back in 1986.

I had read a few of the later titles that appeared like "Zombie World", "Night of the Living Dead: London", and later editions of "Dead World" published by Caliber Comics. While all of these were interesting, none of them compelled me to want to grab the next issue to see what happens.

I had tried twice to relaunch my own version of a zombie holocaust comic called "The Dead", both times the books had great reviews, however both suffered the loss of thier artists within three issues. Not being able to find the right replacements with a style geared towards the genre, caused the cancellation both times with numbers climbing. Frustrating to no end...sigh...

Anyway, people I knew kept asking, "so whadda ya think of the new Walking Dead comic?". So I decided it go out and give it a try. Anyone who knows me, knows I'm a huge zombie fan and has seen about every film made from "The Invisable Invaders" (cool & underrated), all the Dead and Living Dead films even the italian flicks, seen 'em all.

So it was off to the local comic shop. Ebay proved the early editions were both hard to get and expensive. My local shop owner was out of the first trade, but I picked up the second one and all the remaining issues.

Well, I've just finished everything up to issue 16 and here's my thoughts. This is one of the best books on the market today. I can see what the strong appeal is. First I'll tackle the art of the series: Both Tony Moore and current artist Charlie Adlard are good, not jaw dropping great, but they are suitable for the book. Sometimes the characters seemed a little stiff (okay for zombies, I suppose...lol). Often backgrounds were left lacking a little. The use of grey tones was nice as was the use of shadow and lighting. I'd read about the penciling change and I feel it hardly missed a beat. Only after reading in the letters page about readers comparing the pros and cons of each did I really noticed. I hope that's a good thing. Overall my grade on the art is a C+ or B-.

Now for the writing/plot : Not much to complain about here. The characters have depth and are well rounded and motivated. Many soap opera methods of pacing are used though out the book making it a quick and enteresting read. Believe me keeping a band together, feeling safe and goal focused is a real challenge in this type of book. And Kirkman hits his mark. If I could lodge a complaint, it's just not enough gore and zombie action. We all love our characters but we love our blood and guts too. My overall grade here is a B+ or A-

This is a good comic! Glad I bought it, one of the best on the market today, and I'll be buying issue 17. Also big bonuses for an awesome letters page, and for keeping a fairly regular schedule.

While there will always be comparisons in comics. I'm glad people enjoyed our "Dead World" series and hope the new one lives up to expectations. Meanwhile,

I look forward to publishing a new "The Dead" series near the end of the year. I can only hope my book will be greeted with as much anticipation.

Keep up the good work.
Ralph Griffith

Thanks for all the kind words and critiques, Ralph. I'll be sure to check out "The Dead" when it comes out. Please write back and let us all know when you've got a firm date set.

Okay, boys... that's it for the letters column this month. I hope you enjoyed it. I'll see you all back here next month, right? RIGHT?!

-Robert Kirkman

THE WALKING DEAD #20

kirkman
adlard
moore

alone!

may
2005

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'05



WRITTEN BY
RICK REMENDER
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SEA OF RED

VOL. 1
NO GRAVE BUT THE SEA



TRADE PAPERBACK COLLECTION SEA OF RED ISSUES 1-4
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